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MOSSFOOT, THE BRAVE:

OR,

THE FAT SCOUT OF ONEIDA LAKE.

BY W. J. HAMILTON,

AUTHOR OF THE FOLLOWING DIME NOVELS:

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THE FAT SCOUT OF ONEIDA LAKE.

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MOSSFOOT, THE BRAVE.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHIEFTAINS' DUEL.

A STRONG-LIMBED warrior, bearing above his right ear the eagle-feather of a chief, was climbing the steep side of a rocky hill, not far from the shore of Oneida Lake. He was yet a young man, but the scar upon his cheek and the long fringes of hair upon his leggins, showed that he had earned his rank in battle. One acquainted with the Indian costume would have known, at a glance, that he was a Huron—that terrible tribe whose name is connected with nearly every massacre in northern New York during the early years of the Revolution. He was dressed richly, for an Indian, and his arms were of the best description. His hatchet was of steel, his knife the work of a skilled artisan, and his rifle one of the best from the arsenal of the English King. Over his shoulder and about his waist a long wampum belt was flung, beautifully worked with the emblems of his tribe.

What was this strange chieftain doing here, so far from his tribe, alone in the country of his enemies?

His face was full of stern purpose, and indeed no common business could have led him to expose himself in this manner. Reaching the crest of the hill, which commanded a view of the beautiful lake, its islands, shores and headlands, the eye of the Indian dwelt long upon the beauty of the scene, and his nostrils dilated as he thought that the great Six Nations had been weak enough to permit the whites to encroach upon their soil.

"The land is good," he muttered, as he gazed. "It is too good for the Oneida; the Huron must dwell upon it."

He now began to collect pieces of dry wood, and form them in three heaps, equidistant from each other. When they

were built to suit his fancy, he struck a light by means of a flint and steel, and fired the three heaps. As soon as they were fairly in a blaze, he threw a little wet wood upon each, and three columns of black smoke shot up toward the zenith. He did not attend to them longer, but fixed his intent gaze upon a point of land on the other side of the lake, which, at this place, was about four miles in width. He had not long to wait, for a smoke rose slowly from a level green meadow upon the point.

"Mossfoot is not a liar," muttered the Huron. "He will come to the battle with Scar Face, and we shall see who wins the Silver Voice."

He turned and scattered the fires with his feet and trod them into the earth, for, now that his purpose had been gained, he did not wish to attract attention. The fire did not burn long on the other side of the lake, and soon after, a canoe shot out from the shelter of the point and headed toward the spot where he stood. The speed with which the light craft approached, showed that it was impelled by an arm of no ordinary power, and the Huron watched it with a grim smile.

"Ha!" he muttered; "the arm of Mossfoot is strong, but is it as strong as that of Scar Face? Let the man who is bravest wear a scalp in his belt—he will earn it."

As the canoe neared the shore it was seen to contain but a single Indian, who stood erect in the stern as he plied the paddle. As the light craft neared the bank he bounded lightly ashore, and dragged his birch boat high up from the water, then turned his gaze up the hill, where the immovable figure of Scar Face was seen gazing down upon him, in his fixed, imperturbable way.

The man who had landed could not have been more than twenty-five years of age. He had an open, frank, ingenuous countenance, seldom seen in an Indian. His dress was a buck-skin tunic, upon the breast of which was embroidered, in colored beads, the totem of his tribe. His scalp-lock, ostentatiously long, dropped from his fore crown to his shoulder, inviting the grasp of the foe, while the hawk-feather bespoke him also a chief, though so young. He was an Oneida, one of the greatest of the six great tribes which held so

long and nobly the country from the Mohawk to Niagara. His weapons were the same as those worn by the Huron, with the exception that he carried two hatchets.

"Ha, Huron!" he said, in the language of the Iroquois; "Mossfoot is here and ready to talk with the Scar Face. What has he to say?"

"Listen!" said Scar Face, as he descended the hill rapidly and placed himself by the side of the young Oneida. "When Scar Face sent his enemy a message across the great lake, he knew that he sent to one who would listen to his words. Did not Mossfoot, the Oneida, steal into the Huron lodges and take away the Silver Voice, the pride of the Huron nation?"

"It is good," said Mossfoot. "The tongue of Scar Face is not double when he speaks. Mossfoot took the Silver Voice from the Huron lodges. He came alone among a thousand braves and stole their best treasure from them, while they slept like moles."

"Mossfoot is a snake that crawls and hisses," said the Huron, a look of indescribable ferocity crossing his face. "He has stolen the pride of the Hurons, and Scar Face has come to take her back."

"Silver Voice is too heavy for a Huron dog to carry," replied Mossfoot, contemptuously. "An Oneida only is strong enough to take her in his arms. Mossfoot saw the Silver Voice at the great council. Her eyes were like the stars when the clouds were gone from the sky, and her voice was like the music of the singing spirits. Mossfoot spoke in her ears and his words were good. She said that if there was an Oneida brave enough to come into the lodges of the Hurons and steal her away, she would come into his lodge, Wagh! she makes the lodge of Mossfoot light to-day, for what is there an Oneida chief would not dare when only a *Huron* stops the way!"

Scar Face struck his foot impatiently upon the earth, and turned fiercely upon the Oneida:

"Mossfoot is all words, words, words," he retorted. "Scar Face did not walk the woods so many suns to *talk*, but to fight. He sent a message to Mossfoot by the White Prophet, when he came into the Oneida village. He said: 'Let Mossfoot meet him by the lake, and when he sees three fires at

once upon the high hill let him come and fight with Scar Face.'"

"Mossfoot is here!" said the Oneida, quietly. "Look, we will fight by the lake yonder, and he who wins shall claim Silver Voice for his own."

"Shall she see the battle?" demanded Scar Face, in an eager tone.

"She shall see it," replied Mossfoot. "Let us go."

They laid their rifles upon the bank, and walked hastily down the low beach, side by side. While they had been talking another canoe had left the opposite shore, and was crossing rapidly toward a piece of level ground upon which the struggle was to take place. As they reached the beach, the canoe shot up to the bank, and an Indian girl of rare beauty, who showed traces of white blood—by no means an uncommon thing among the Hurons—stepped out on the sand. Scar Face started eagerly forward to greet her, but she waved him back with a gesture of lofty contempt.

"Why has Scar Face come to the Oneida country?" she said. "Is it that Mossfoot should make him a dog, and send him back to his tribe?"

"Has Silver Voice forgotten that she is a daughter of the Huron?" demanded the chief, in a faltering voice.

"Yes; Silver Voice has forgotten that there is *any* nation save the Six Nations—any tribe save the Oneida."

"And did not Silver Voice promise to come into the lodge of Scar Face?"

"No; the chief, my father, would have it so, and how could I refuse? I am a daughter of the Oneidas; my husband is one of the great tribe, and I love him."

It is impossible to describe the fury shown by the Huron chief as she spoke. His muscular hands opened and closed upon the handle of his knife, and Mossfoot, fearing that he might be tempted to strike her, stepped between them, and waved him back.

"Have no fear," said Scar Face. "A Huron chief is not a dog to strike at the breast of a woman. He will fight now, and she shall see how I will kill the man she has chosen."

"Why should Mossfoot fight?" said Silver Voice. "I will

never leave him, and if he is slain I will never rest until the man who has killed him lies dead at my feet."

Mossfoot gave her a look of deep devotion, and signed to her to step back.

"Have no fear for me, wife of my heart," he said. "Scar Face was not born to carry the scalp of Mossfoot in his belt."

She entreated him to pause, but he put her aside and faced the Huron, who had already drawn his knife and hatchet. There they stood, two statues carved in bronze, their eyes sending out lurid gleams, the hatchet and knife in either hand flashing in the sun-rays. Each man knew the prowess of his adversary, and that the least mistake on either side must be fatal.

Scar Face, whose countenance only showed brutal ferocity, began to walk in a circle about the Oneida, who, turning upon his left heel as on a pivot, waited calmly for the expected assault. His *tongue* was not idle, for an Indian, no matter how brave, will taunt his adversary in the hour of battle.

"Scar Face is not in a hurry. The scalp of Mossfoot would look well in his girdle, but Scar Face does not want it. Wagh! Go home to the Hurons and send a woman to fight me. I am weary of facing a dog!"

The taunt had its effect. Scar Face dashed in, only to retreat with a slash across the left shoulder, while he parried with difficulty the hatchet-stroke which accompanied the blow of the knife. Mossfoot evidently used each hand equally well, which gave him a terrible advantage in a hand-to-hand struggle. Scar Face leaped out of his reach, the blood trickling from his wounded shoulder.

"Why does Scar Face turn pale when he sees blood?" said Silver Voice, with a taunting laugh, her Indian blood on fire. She was proud of her husband, too, and delighted in his prowess. Scar Face did not turn his head, but he felt the taunt keenly.

"Mossfoot can not fight with Scar Face alone," he said, fiercely. "He knows that the tongue of Silver Voice can wound more than the knife of an Oneida, and he bids her speak."

"Silver Voice will speak no more!" cried Mossfoot. "Let her be silent."

The Indian woman inclined her head, and the two chiefs began to circle about each other, Mossfoot now taking the offensive. Fairly warmed up to his work, he showed an agility and address worthy of his great name. Again and again he dashed in, and every time he retreated his knife was reddened with the blood of the Huron, who had the worst of every encounter. But, in a struggle of this kind, where the hands and arms act as shields, many wounds may be given without actual danger to life. Scar Face was bleeding from half a dozen wounds in his arms and hands, while Mossfoot had received a long, ragged cut across the breast from the edge of the hatchet. Both men were now wild with the fury of battle, and a chance blow might at any moment end all. As they staggered apart, panting for breath and resting from sheer exhaustion, Mossfoot cast a look of genuine admiration at the Huron.

"Mossfoot loves a brave man," he said. "Scar Face is worthy to be an Oneida, and sit in the council of chiefs."

"Is Scar Face a woman now?" cried the Huron, tauntingly. "Shall a child of the Hurons be sent to fight with Mossfoot?"

"No; Scar Face is a brave man. Let him turn his face toward the Huron villages and say that he has fought with Mossfoot and could not conquer him. I will go to the Oneidas and say that I have fought with Scar Face and have only my blood to show."

"Shall the Silver Voice go back with me to the Huron villages?" demanded the chief.

Mossfoot shook his head slowly. "Let not the Huron ask too much," he said. "The Silver Voice has lain in my bosom, and Mossfoot can not give her up. Let Scar Face ask something else."

"He came for Silver Voice, and he must have her—or death!"

"Take death, then!" cried Mossfoot, hurling his knife at the bosom of the speaker as he detected him in the act of drawing back his hand for the same purpose. The knife turned once in the air, and Scar Face, without any definite idea why he did it, threw up his arm to guard his breast, and the heavy blade passed through the fore-arm between the two

principal bones, so great was the force with which it was sent, and actually pierced the flesh of his breast. With a howl of rage Scar Face threw his knife in return, which Mossfoot eluded by a swift turn of the body, so that the keen blade cut a furrow along his ribs without inflicting permanent injury. Scar Face seized the knife and strove to draw it from his arm, but it resisted, and he caught his hatchet again just in time to ward off a blow which Mossfoot leveled at him.

But the Huron had lost much blood, and his resistance was now but feeble. Again Mossfoot struck, and his enemy interposed his hatchet; but his arm dropped useless as the blow fell, and the hatchet fell to the earth. The Quixotic enterprise of the Huron had failed, and he stood calmly awaiting his death.

"Mossfoot will strike," he said, raising his head, proudly. "Scar Face does not want to live in the world. His father beckons him to the happy hunting-grounds, to chase the red deer under the bending trees. Mossfoot will strike."

But the Oneida hesitated. He was not a brutal man, but one who loved the din of the battle, and had been taught that to the victor belong the spoils. His enemy stood unarmed before him, and he had only to strike the fatal blow and tear off the bleeding trophy, but some impulse for which he could not account restrained him.

"Why does the Oneida pause?" said the Huron. "Does he think that Scar Face is a dog who is afraid to look on death? No; he is ready to go, but he has sent many Oneidas before him to the spirit-land."

Still, Mossfoot did not strike. His eyes had lost the gleam which they had worn during the battle, and he fingered the handle of his hatchet convulsively. Scar Face looked fiercely at the girl, who stood quietly near at hand, in no way interfering with her husband.

"You will look on the death of a great chief, Silver Voice. But fear not; the Hurons will remember Scar Face, and the time will come when they will avenge him. Mossfoot is a dog; he conquered, and now he dare not take the scalp. Look: my hands are red with the blood of many Oneidas; their scalps have hung at my girdle; I heard their death-cry

as I took the long scalp-lock in my hand. Wah-te-ha—Huron! Oneidas are dogs."

Mossfoot took a single step in advance, and whirled his hatchet aloft. The eye of Scar Face gleamed with hope, for he thought he had brought upon himself the death of a brave. The little ax gleamed brightly as it fell.

CHAPTER II.

ICHABOD SALMON.

It fell, but not upon the head of the Huron, for the steel barrel of a rifle turned it aside, while a hearty voice said:

"Thar, chief, none of that! It don't stand tew reason fur you to hit a man when he's down, so tew speak."

The Oneida turned fiercely upon the new-comer, but broke into a laugh as he saw who it was. A long, lean individual in a hunting-coat which for grease and dirt could not be surpassed; his leggings, torn in many places, and fastened together with strips of buck-skin in any thing but an artistic manner; his face, homely beyond description, with its cavernous mouth, large nose, and small twinkling eyes which sparkled with good nature.

"No, no, Mossy," he said. "I don't like tew interfere, but it don't look rite, somehow. He's a Canada nigger, I allow, but he's all cut tew pieces."

"Listen to the white hunter," said Silver Voice, laying her hand upon the arm of her husband. "Let the Huron go back to the hills and leave us in peace."

"Will no hand strike the sharp hatchet into the brain of Scar Face?" said the Huron. "I seek death; why has the white man come to me?"

"I tell you what, critter," replied the white man, "thar's a time comin' when you'll have a chainece to lap blood if you want it, so you had better save yourself. Let me take ont that knife."

The Indisa could not fully understand the words, but he

hid the action, and extended his arm, still pierced by the knife. The new-comer deftly drew out the knife, so tightly wedged in between the bones. Not a cry escaped the stoical Huron, although his agony must have been intense. When it was removed, but little blood flowed, for no important vein or artery had been touched, and, the white man wiping away the clotted blood, took some lint out of his "possible sack"—such men always go provided—and laid it upon the wound which he bound up with a strip of buck-skin.

"Patched up, Huron," he said, in a horrible attempt at the Algonquin tongue. "Now, as your walkers are in good order, mebbe you'd better use 'em. My friend Mossy, here, is a tender-hearted boy—he is, by gracious! But, he's a mortal, an' he's an *Injun*, an' *Injun* blood won't stand so much as white blood."

"Does Mossfoot tell me to go?" demanded the Huron. "I am in his hands, and yours."

"*Injun*," said the white man, "be keerful—be *very* keerful. I eat little *Injun* boys like you fur breakfast, mornings. My unnatural appetite craves each meat, and I will have it. But I ain't hungry now, *Injun*. I eat two Hurons and a St. Regis at six o'clock, and I don't want no *lunch*."

The Indian gave him a contemptuous glance. He understood enough of his dialect to be sure that he was lying.

"My brother has a long tongue," he said, "and it goes like the wind-wheels the French built upon the great river."

"*Injun*, once ag'in I warn ye. My temper is gittin' up—my angry passions rise within my manly buzzum. Go away *quick*, before I eat ye! It ain't in my natur' to jump onto a wounded man and drink his blood, but I'll *hev* to do it if you keep talkin'."

The Indian made a gesture of defiance, and turned to Mossfoot, who was looking on with a careless smile.

"Look, Mossfoot," said Scar Face, bending his head. "I offer you my scalp, for it is yours. Will the Oneida take his own?"

Mossfoot shook his head. All his anger had passed away, and he was not the brave to slay another in cold blood. He pointed toward the north.

"The way is long to the Huron villages, and Scar Face has

lost blood. He will walk slowly, and it is better for him to begin a long path."

"Hear, Manitou!" cried Scar Face, lifting his unwounded hand to the clear sky. "Hear the words of a chief. I will never rest or have peace until Mossfoot, the Oneida, is dead, and the Silver Voice is in my lodge. I go, Oneida, but the time is not far away when you will see my face again."

He turned and walked rapidly up the stream toward the place where he had left his rifle. Mossfoot saw him depart, and extended his hand to the ragged hunter.

"How do, brudder!" he said. "Come to see Mossfoot?"

"Rayther so, I guess; yes. I'm sorter round loose on the trail jest now, Mossy, fur as my soul liveth I think thar's mischief breeding here in the Mohawk kentry. I tell you the Johnsons ain't happy, not by no means. They've ruled so long in this kentry that it riles their passhins to see us Whigs having it *our* way. Mossy, thar'll be wigs on the grass before a month has gone by, rite here in our own sile."

Mossfoot hesitated, for he knew by the manner of the ragged hunter that he wished to see which way the inclinations of the Oneidas went. The Six Nations had taken but little part in the struggle, except in detached bands, but it was hard to say what course they would take if the arena of war was transferred to their soil.

"Oneida friend to Yankee," said Mossfoot at last. "Oneida want to be friend to English, too."

"But, look here, Mossy; s'pose that cantankerous and b'iling Huron was to take one side, what side would you take?"

"Mossfoot will never strike by the side of a Huron!" replied the Oneida, fiercely. "If Scar Face English, then Mossfoot is a Yankee. If Scar Face Yankee, Mossfoot *English*."

"All rite, Mossy. Now I tell ye rite here that the cuss is English, clear through, and I know what I'm talking about Silver Voice, how are ye? Lord love my heart alive, ef the sight of your face ain't good fur sore eyes!"

"Silver Voice is glad to see the white hunter," returned the wife of Mossfoot in a mellow voice. "How is it with Bessie? Silver Voice loves her well."

"Bessie is well, my dear," said the hunter. "But, see

here; she says you ain't bin to see her in over three months! That ain't fair, my gal."

"Silver Voice could not come," answered the Indian woman, "but she will come now. Hush; some one walks the woods!"

A man had appeared upon the crest of the hill, and was looking down at the party. With the instinctive caution always shown in a new country he had grasped a weapon, but as he saw the Indian woman his hand dropped to his side, and he came down the hill at a swinging pace. He was a young man, perhaps a year older than Mossfoot, with a handsome face as faces go, but with a reckless devil looking out of his bold, black eyes. He was dressed as a gentleman hunter, with a handsome rifle, pistols and *couteau de chasse*, with a keen curved blade. He ran his eyes hastily over the party, but his bold gaze rested longest upon the face of Silver Voice.

"Good-day, here, friends!" he said, casting a look at the bloody and trampled soil. "You must have had better luck than I by the marks I see, but where is your game?"

"Swallowed!" replied Ichabod, gruffly. "Swallowed raw."

The stranger burst into a laugh, as his eyes took in the whimsical face and ragged garb of the hunter.

"Mebbe you don't know me, stranger," continued Ichabod, "and mebbe you don't want to, but I advise you not to laugh too loud or long."

"And why so, Ajax? Why so, most worthy defier of the lightning? Your ragged coat but ill accords with the easy manner in which you use your tongue."

"Mebbe you don't like my coat," retorted Ichabod. "Then don't tread on the tail of it—that's all I've got to say. I don't rare up easy; I'm a man of peace, but I kin lick any stranger out of his moccasins that laughs at me without a reason."

"But, Ajax—"

"You call me that ag'in and thar'll be a fight," snarled Ichabod. "Stranger, I've chawed up men for less than that; I've swallowed many a Huron because he p'inted the finger of scorn at me; I've feasted on Frenchmen fur the same cause—but I never e't a Englishman, and I begin to hunger and thirst after one."

The stranger started and laid a hand upon a weapon.

"An Englishman; why do you call me that?"

"Stranger, I *didn't* call ye that. I sed I'd never e't an Englishman, but you jump into the coat with sech amazin' spryness that I'm bound to believe that it fits ye."

"I am not an Englishman," replied the stranger, fiercely.

"All rite; I'll take yer word fur it. Stranger, my coat ar' ragged, my buck-skins ar' patched, but I ain't a *fool*. Now, what mout you want here?"

"I am out on a hunting expedition and have concluded to spend some weeks in this region. I wish to find a white family near at hand where I can lodge."

"It's dreadful unlucky fur ye to querrel with me on the start, 'cause I've got the only house within ten miles."

"Oh, come, my friend," said the stranger, laughing; "why not take this matter in the right spirit? I must have my joke, no matter what happens, but I really meant no harm in laughing at your picturesque garb. Can't you take a joke?"

"I kin take a joke from a friend," said Ichabod, quietly; "but I don't 'low every stranger passin' by to make game of me. Ain't you choosin' a kind of unlucky time to hunt? There's going to be thunder all 'round the sky afore long."

"The war-cloud will not roll this way soon, my friend. You have been misinformed."

"Like enough; I've scouted thirty year, come spring, and seen a heap of bush-fighting in my time, and of course every new man that comes into the bush can tell me the news. What mout be your name?"

"Ralph Swinton."

"Sounds almost like an English name, don't it?" said Ichabod, with a grin.

Swinton began to see that the ragged hunter was an acute reasoner, after all, and a man not easily deceived.

"Who is the Indian?" he asked. "I may need his help in passing about among the tribes."

"This is Mossfoot, the Oneida, a young man, but a chief," replied the hunter. "Come; I won't lay up what you said ag'in' you, and will give you lodging in my house. But take keer what you do thar. It's the house of an honest wood-

man, and a man who knows how to *shoot*, if he *does* wear a ragged coat."

"You did not give me the name of the lady," said Ralph, paying no attention to the implied threat of the hunter.

"That's the wife of Mossfoot," said Ichabod, carelessly. "She kin take keer of herself, so look sharp what you say to her. You gentlemen-born are sometimes too free with their tongues. It won't do in *this* section."

Mossfoot, who had been regarding the new-comer with an, thing but a pleased expression, now spoke a few words to his wife, and with a graceful farewell to Ichabod, she entered her own canoe, and began to move up the lake rapidly.

"By my life, Sir Hunter, that is a beautiful woman!" remarked Ralph, in a low tone, meant only to be heard by Salmon—"too beautiful to be the wife of an Indian."

"If I hear any more talk of that kind I shall mildly but firmly require you to find a shelter somewhar else than in my house," answered Ichabod. "Wal, Mossy, I s'pose your canoe will hold three?"

The Indian nodded, and led the way up the lake to the place where the canoe had been left. The blood which dropped from the wounds of the Huron was plainly visible upon the grass.

"Your game got away, after all," suggested Ralph, breaking off a clover-leaf which had a drop of blood on it.

"No sech thing," retorted Ichabod. "Stranger, ye ain't anyways inklined to be inquisitive, be ye?"

"Why, Ajax?"

"'Cause I notice ye know a think or two about scouting, more than gentlemen, unless they ar' *sojers*, orter know. Fust you know, I'll begin to suspect ye, and if I do, you won't be the fust fox I've run to earth."

Ralph Swinton put on a look of careless indifference, but he was ill at ease, after all. There were reasons why he did not wish his conduct too closely inquired into, especially by as keen a man as Ichabod Salmon. He threw down the bit of grass and followed the hunter without a word, as he entered the canoe, and Ichabod turned to observe the stranger.

A man unacquainted with woodcraft can not get into a canoe for the first time without an accident, which no one knew

better than Salmon; but Swinton stepped in lightly, keeping his balance with ease, and at once sat down in the middle of the bark.

"Just so," observed Ichabod. "You know what a canoe is, don't ye, stranger?"

"You seem to be studying me rather closely, sir!" Swinton spoke angrily.

"Stands to reason I want to get acquainted with one of the members of my fam'ly," returned Ichabod, with a grin. "If it is all right, it kain't hurt ye if I know all about ye; if it's wrong, I've got to know it. Push off, Mossy; give me that other paddle."

The canoe shot out from the bank and was quickly a hundred feet from the shore. Half a mile away, moving swiftly up the lake, was the lighter canoe, in which Silver Voice sat.

The leaves were parted upon the bank as they left it, and Scar Face fixed his glittering eye upon the three men, with his finger on the trigger of his rifle, anxiously awaiting the moment which would bring the three men in line. "All at once," he hissed. "Scar Face will be avenged."

CHAPTER III.

THE SALMON FAMILY.

ICHABOD SALMON'S house was built close to the shore of the lake, in a little sheltered bay. Here he had lived for thirty years, joining heart and hand in all the struggles of the colony, and always ready to take the trail against French or Indians. He was now nearly sixty years of age, though no one looking at him would have supposed him a day over forty. He was one of those men who never grow old, and who become so hardened by a life of exposure that the years seem to have no effect upon them. The house was a large one, built of squared logs, dovetailed together at the corners. A good stretch of land had been cleared and cultivated by

the sturdy sons of the old hunter, who were six in number—all of them, like himself, tall and sinewy men, bold, in the hour of danger, but desirous of doing right by all men. The great barns in the rear of the house, the fields of waving wheat and the general air of thrift about the place, showed they were no idlers. The boys were all out on the farm work, and Mrs. Salmon, a still fresh-looking old lady, was busy within the house, when she heard the sound of a horn across the lake.

"There's father," she said. "Bessie!"

"Yes, mother!" cried a sweet voice. "Here I am."

"Father is blowing the horn for the boat. Will you take Hans Phiffer and go over for him?"

The girl addressed came out of the next room, holding a large straw hat in her hand by the ribbons. The last child of the Salmons, she was strangely enough one of the most beautiful, delicate creatures to be seen on the border. Her short hair curled in golden-brown rings about a fair, open brow; her form was symmetry itself, while her fresh color and buoyant step proclaimed perfect health. The mother looked at her fondly.

She ran out of the house calling Hans Phiffer, and directly after, a ponderous tread shook the earth, and Hans Phiffer, the redoubtable Hans, champion snorer of that section, hove in view. In person he was a picture. About five feet in height, he weighed two hundred and fifty pounds. His face was broader than it measured in a perpendicular line, and his mouth of tremendous caliber, generally distended in a grin of perfect content, for Hans Phiffer was happy. He lived with a family who did not make him work too hard, and who did not restrict him in the matter of food!

"Vat you vants, Miss Pessie?" he asked, in a hollow voice.

"I want you to come with me in the boat. Hurry, Hans, please. Lie down and roll; you'll get along faster."

"Fraulein Pessie always make fon mit Hans," he said, grinning. "Vat you shpose I care, all der dimes? You peen goin' in der poat?"

"Yaw!" said Bessie, laughing.

He followed her with stately step, and managed to arrive in time to push off a large bateau which lay upon the shore

and to step a small mast. This done, Bessie took a seat in the middle of the boat, while Hans, with a large paddle, sculled the bateau out of the bay to where she could get the wind. With Bessie's help, he hoisted a small lug-sail and jib, and giving the sheet to Bessie's care, took up the steering-oar and headed across the lake to a point from which the sound of the horn had been wafted upon the passing breeze. Bessie handled the sheet with precision, and the bateau rounded-to under the shelter of a point upon which Ichabod, Ralph Swinton and Mossfoot were waiting.

How had they escaped the fatal aim of Scar Face? However it might have been, here they were, safe and sound, waiting for the bateau. Bessie bounded lightly to the land and ran into the extended arms of her father.

"Here's a little gal that don't keer if her father is a slouchy old varmint," he said. "She knows that it's the old man's way—she does. Mr. Ralph Swinton, this is my darter, Bessie, the best and pootiest gal, ef she is mine, in the hull Mohawk kentry."

"You do her no more than justice," said Swinton, with a bold look. "I have seen many beautiful women, but were I Paris, she should have the golden prize."

"I donno any thing about the gentleman you mention," said Ichabod—whose classical education had been neglected—"but this I do know: I love my darter as well as ere a gentleman of them all."

"Yaw!" put in Hans, "dot vas so, yoost ash yur spoke mit him."

"Why, hullo! If thar ain't my prize fat boy," cried Ichabod. "Mr. Swinton, I'm *proud* of that ar' boy. He kin eat more, work least, and travel the slowest of any boy in this State"

"He looks like a gin-puncheon set up on pegs," said Swinton, laughing.

Hans gave him a look of anger, for he allowed none save members of the family to make fun of him.

"Vell," he said, "I knowed a mans down py Dorrap vat got so rich as nefer vas pecause he minted his own pishiness ant let udder beeples alone. Vat you dinks?"

"Hans!" cried Bessie.

"Vell, vat for he makes his mout' dalk so mooch about me, den? I don't spoke nottings mit him; vy for he spoke mit me, right away quick?"

"There, jump in, Mr. Swinton," ordered Salmon, "or we shall have a free fight on the spot. Hans is a hard customer when he gets his angry passhuns aroused. I've see'd him chaw up a young Dutchman in a way which would astonish ye—he did, by gracious!"

"He must have fallen on him," said Swinton, stepping into the boat.

"I valls onto you vun of dese days, unt see how you likes it dens," muttered Hans, indignantly. "Vy for Mynheer Salmon gone rount der goontry unt pick oop dem fellers, unt pring 'em to der 'ous? Pimepye pooty soon right away quick he make some trubble mit der 'ouse, all der vile."

It was evident that Swinton had not impressed the young Dutchman favorably. Ichabod was about to follow the others into the boat, when Mossfoot drew him aside.

"Mossfoot will go," he said, in a low whisper; "let my brother beware of the young white man, for he is not a friend to the Yankees."

"How do you know?" demanded Ichabod, quickly.

"The heart of Mossfoot tells him this," was the reply. "Let my brother take care that he does not warm a snake in his bosom, for it may strike him dead."

"I've got six sons over yender, any one of whom kin break this young feller in two. I ain't no babby myself by no means, and I ain't afraid. Why don't you come over to the house, Mossy?"

"Mossfoot will come, but not now," replied the Oneida. "There is work for him to do."

The boat was pushed off, leaving the Indian standing upon the point gazing after them. The brow of Swinton contracted strangely as he gazed at him.

"That's a treacherous dog," he remarked.

"Mossfoot?" cried Bessie. "Surely, sir, you don't know the Oneida. He is one of the most open-hearted, generous men alive. I have heard of the Indians as being brutal to their wives, but there is no man living who could show a more chivalrous devotion to his wife than he."

"Pshaw; you speak highly of this forest Adonis, and yet I can not like his face."

"Mossfoot vas a good fellers," added Hans, dogmatically; "unt I knows it."

"That's so!" exclaimed Ichabod. "I know the young chief clear through, and he's a square-toed man."

"I may be mistaken," said Swinton, "but to me the man appears treacherous. Of course you ought to know him better than I."

Hans gave a dissatisfied grunt, and headed the boat toward the farm-house. Swinton drew Bessie into conversation, and for the first time the girl listened to the words of a really educated man. He exerted himself to the utmost to be agreeable, and by the time they reached the landing he had succeeded, in a measure, in removing the bad impression he had made in the beginning. He was a man who had traveled much, and the conversation of such a person must have had its charm for a girl whose natural impulses and tastes were far above her rude surroundings. Bessie had been a year in Albany, and had a better education than usually fell to the lot of Colonial women. Added to this she was naturally bright at repartee, and her quick tongue gave her an advantage over ordinary mortals.

"This is my home," said Salmon, as the boat rounded to in a little bay. "It ain't much of a home, but it belongs to me; I am happy here, my men like me, my sons ar' good boys, and my wife and darter make much of the old man. Why can't we live here happy, undisturbed by wars?"

"These colonies are always in trouble," explained Swinton.

"Colonies?" cried Ichabod. "I thought you knew that these are the Confederate States of Ameriky?"

"A slip of the tongue. I've got so used to calling them colonies that I forgot the 'Declaration of Independence.' I want you to undersand that, though I take no part in this quarrel, I do not believe that the States will ever establish their independence."

"I know," said Salmon; "you are a-sitting on the fence, kalkilating which way to jump, ain't ye?"

Swinton made no answer, but there was a covert sneer on

his lips. He followed his host to the house, and received an introduction to his wife and six stalwart sons, with a shrug of the shoulders and a laugh.

"I am surprised that none of your sons should be in the army, Mr. Salmon."

"I guess yer don't know us, Square. Thar ain't one of them boys that don't stand ready at the call of the Gin'ral. But, ye see, the crops must be tended to, and the Gin'ral he let the boys come up to see arter them."

"Where is their regiment?"

"At Schnyler," replied Ichabod, "but we hang to old Herkimer round here. We think he's about the right cheese, and if these blasted Tories come down with the Johnsons, we'll show 'em that the Salmons hev got long arms."

"You don't like the Johnsons?"

"We ain't got no call to. Mind ye, the old baronit was a good 'un, old Sir William—a man that knowed all the Injun ways, and could do more with them than any man now on the sile. But, Sir John ain't Sir William, by a durn sight. But, draw up, draw up! The dinner is sp'iling while we talk."

Enjoyed a perfect border dinner, and then, bidding his wife and children good-by for a few hours, Swinton took his rifle and went out on a hunt, refusing companionship.

Away from the farm he stopped in a sheltered place and took a seat upon a mossy knoll, and remained

"By heaven, she is a beauty!" he muttered; "I think I never, in all my life, saw her equal. What if I win her? I bring down upon my head the undying vengeance of seven border ruffians, men whose hate is as undying as that of the Corsican. I flatter myself that I made some progress with the girl—and yet—"

His reverie was interrupted by the sound of hoofs, and the head of a horse appeared at the opening to a bridle-path which led into the glen. Swinton did not rise, hoping that the horseman might pass without observing him, but he was disappointed, for the rider reined his horse to a stand-still, and looked keenly at Swinton.

"Good-day, sir," he cried. "Can you tell me how far I am from the place of a settler by the name of Salmon?"

Swinton returned the gaze of the speaker before he answered, and saw a finely-built young man, in citizen's dress, whose every movement proclaimed him a gentleman. Swinton decided that he was a man of some authority among the people of the Mohawk region.

"You are nearly a mile from Salmon's," answered he, at last. "You are in the right path."

The stranger turned to ride away, but came back again.

"I beg your pardon, sir, but did I ever meet you before?"

"I think not," said Swinton, turning around his head, while a look of annoyance passed over his face.

"My name is Joseph Seaman, by profession a surgeon, at present in the service of the Patriots. Perhaps the name may recall me to your remembrance."

Swinton shook his head impatiently.

"I can't place you," said Seaman, laughing, and it is, no doubt, a mistake. Good-day, sir."

He rode on, and Swinton smote his open palm angrily upon the mossy knoll where he sat.

"It is one of those cursed commissioners," he muttered, "and if he has time to think it over he will be sure to remember where he saw me. I must get to work soon. Oh, if I could only see Scar Face now, I would make him useful."

As if in answer to the wish, the bushes beside him parted, and Scar Face suddenly stood before him. He had made a sling from his wampum-belt, in which his wounded arm was suspended, and had slung his rifle by the straps to his back, where it was out of the way. He walked up to Swinton and extended his unwounded arm.

"Ha, my brother!" he cried. "The sight of you makes the heart strong. What does Hard Heart in the Oneida country?"

"I might ask you the same, chief," replied Swinton, both using the Algonquin tongue. "Are you not many days' journey from the Hurons?"

"Scar Face came to take that which was lost. Mossfoot the Oneida, came into the Huron lodges and stole away the

Silver Voice. Scar Face sent him a message and asked him to fight. Mossfoot is a great brave and does not fear to fight, even with Scar Face, and we met yonder by the lake."

"It was your blood that I saw then?"

"The sun hid his face from the Huron chief," continued Scar Face. "Mossfoot conquered, and when he would have taken my life, a white hunter came between. They gave me my life, but Scar Face is a dog until Mossfoot is dead."

"I thought I had seen that girl before," avowed Swinton. "Would the Silver Voice know me? She only saw me once, and then she was but a child."

"No; Silver Voice does not know the Hard Heart," replied the chief. "But see, I had my rifle in my hand and aimed to take the lives of all in the canoe. My finger touched the trigger and my eye looked along the barrel, when I saw your face. Could Scar Face turn his rifle against the breast of Hard Heart? The men I hated escaped because I would not harm one who has always been the friend of the Huron."

"Thanks, Scar Face; I have no wish to get a hole drilled through me, even by a friend. Do you mean to stay in this section until you get revenge upon Mossfoot?"

"The arm of Scar Face is weak. He must wait until he is strong before he battles again with Mossfoot."

"Will you do some work for me while you wait?"

"Scar Face is always ready to work for Hard Heart, whom he loves."

"Then listen to me," enjoined the white man, "and I will tell you what to do."

The chief sat down on a knoll close by his side, and for an hour they remained in close consultation. At the end of that time the Indian arose and started away along the shore of the lake, to the place where he had left the canoe in which he had crossed the lake.

Swinton took his rifle and began his hunt, but scarcely had he left the opening when Hans Phiffer, who had been lying under the bushes, rose, made a gesture of derision, and disappeared in the woods.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GATHERING STORM.

THE young man who had announced himself as Josep's Seaman rode on quickly, and reached the Salmon place, where one of the young Dutchmen employed upon the farm ran out to take his horse. Salmon came out hastily, and catching sight of the face of the new-comer, gave utterance to a yell which would have done credit to a Tuscarora brave.

"Joe Seaman, by the mighties! Give us your fist, you young riporate. I don't know any man in York I'd rather see than you. Thunder; the times we've had in the old Putnam Rangers, when you was thar with yer father! I taught ye to shoot, didn't I? Had to come and see the old man, eh?"

"Old Ichabod," said Seaman, with a suspicious catch in his breath. "I thought you would be glad to see me, but I didn't think you would be quite so glad."

"You git out! Wasn't yer father the best friend I ever had, and didn't I teach ye woodcraft? Here, Fred, Jake, Dan—half a dozen of you boys—this is Joe Seaman, you've heerd me talk about. You make him welcome, that's all."

The stalwart sons of Ichabod crowded about the young surgeon and quickly made him feel that he was at home. Bessie was shrinking away slyly from their sight when one of her brothers caught her and brought her forward with gentle force.

"That's my little gal," said Ichabod. "Shake hands with him, Bessie, my girl. He's one of the salt of the earth, Joe Seaman is. Confound my cats, Joe, d'ye remember the time I fou't the two painters on the Horicon?"

"I ought to remember it," said Seaman, gravely, "as but for you I should not be here to tell the story. Miss Bessie, your father saved my life that day, by fighting, single-handed and alone, two panthers, hungry for blood. Do you wonder that I traveled some distance to see him?"

"My father is a good man," said Bessie; "only he will tell outrageous stories about his cannibal propensities sometimes. Only to think of his telling us to-day that he had made a breakfast on some Hurons he found on the other side of the lake!"

"That's old Ichabod all over," said Seaman, laughing. "I have been sent to Fort Schuyler on business, and as all is quiet there, I thought it well to come up and see you. But this quiet will not last long, I am afraid. Burgoyne is on his way south, and Gates is preparing to meet him. The Johnsons are with the English army, and will not neglect an opportunity to revenge themselves upon the Whigs of the Mohawk."

"I guess we'll hev to put the armor on ag'in, boys," said Ichabod. "Never mind; it's a good cause, and we'll make the Johnsons sorry they ever came back to the Mohawk. How long do you stay with us?"

"I am on a secret mission, as it is believed the Johnsons will send emissaries to stir up the Oneidas and Mohawks."

"Thar's a Huron in the kentry, and that means mischief, only Mossfoot sent him back cut up pooty bad. I hain't seen any whites I don't know, except Swinton."

"Who is Swinton? I met a stranger in the woods to-day on a hunt, whose face was familiar, but whom I could not place. He is English, that I am sure of."

"I reckon you met my lodger," explained Ichabod. "Mind, I say now that I have my doubts of the critter. I don't believe he's what he gev himself out to be, and that's a simple hunter; so, if he does turn out bad, don't say I didn't tell ye."

"Why did you bring him here if you had any doubt of his character?" asked the mother of the family, with a somewhat reproachful look at her liege lord.

"I'll tell ye, mother. Ef ye've got a doubtful keeracter in the kentry it's fur better, in my opinion, to have him under yer eye than sloshing round where he likes. So I brung him here, whar I could watch him."

"Not a bad idea for the old scout," rejoined the young surgeon. "Now, then, Ichabod, start your six tall sons for the fort. They'll be wanted, sure."

"You hear that, boys!" cried Salmon, looking with a yearning gaze at his stalwart progeny. "The Gin'ral wants ye, so the doctor says, and when the Gin'ral calls, the sojer must go. Take keer of yerselves, boys. I don't tell ye to be good sojers and not disgrace the name I give ye, because I know ye won't. Git the traps together, boys, and be on the march. The 'assembly' is beating; don't ye hear the music?"

It needed but little time for preparation in those good old days. In half an hour those six brave men, in the old Continental rig, with rifles shouldered, knapsacks slung, the old powder-horn, fancifully carved according to the taste of the owner, in its place, the knife and hatchet slung—for these men would not go to battle without these weapons—stood on the threshold, ready to depart.

Hank, the eldest, a younger picture of his father, was the leader by right—for was he not a sergeant in the Mohawk Rangers? Frederic, George, Absalom and David next in order, and Dan, only twenty-two years of age, but as tall and strong as any of his brothers, went last. Any parents might be proud of such sons. Rough and rude in speech, but open and manly, speaking the truth and honoring their parents, and proud to go out to battle when their country called them.

The last farewells were spoken, and the women stood weeping as the six brave boys, falling into sections of two, swung away along the lake-shore toward Schuyler.

"Don't cry so, old lady," said Ichabod, dashing his rough hand across his eyes. "'Tain't many fam'lys can give six tall sons to the kentry. You ought to be proud of it."

"But to give them all," and the mother, rocking herself to and fro, gave way to her grief. "To give them all at once."

"Don't weep, mother," sobbed Bessie. "The boys will come back; I know they will."

"Ichabod," said the surgeon, "I want to have a little talk with you outside."

The two men left the house and went out upon the farm. It looked desolate to the father now, as he no longer saw

the tall figures of his brave sons moving about at their work.

"I did not hurry your sons away a moment too soon," continued the surgeon, "for the truth is our danger is imminent. Burgoyne, with a mighty army, is sweeping down from the North, and has detached St. Leger, with the Johnsons and the "Mohawk "Greens," to attack Schuyler. It is believed that they are already upon the march, and that one of the Johnson family—I don't know which one—is in the Oneida country, at his work of stirring up the warriors against us."

At this moment Hans Phiffer was seen making his way toward them, at what to him was a very swift walk. Ichabod saw him and laughed aloud.

"Something has gone wrong with Hans, or he wouldn't hurry himself that ar' way. "Let's find out what he wants. Now, you wouldn't believe it, to look at that fellow, but he is really a pretty good scout. If he weighed a hundred pounds less he'd be the best in the kentry."

Hans came up puffing, "larding the lean earth as he walked along," for the rate of progress did not agree with him. He looked furtively at Seaman, who was a stranger to him, and made sly gestures to the old hunter that he wanted to speak to him alone.

"Don't be afraid to speak," commanded Ichabod. "You kin say what you like before this young man."

"Maype he vas frent mid dot Shwinton," persisted Hans. "Of he vas, I don't vant to shpoke dill he gone away."

"No, Hans; what's up?"

"Vell, I dells you. I vent along mit dot Shwinton ven he coes to hunt. He don't hunt not any put he sits town mit a leetle pank, unt vistles. Den, pimepye pooty soon coomes along an Injun vat hat peen fight mid somepoty, unt he vas all cut up, unt his arm vas in a sling, unt he look pooty mat mit efferypoty."

"Did the Indian w'ar an eagle-feather on his scalp-lock, Hans?" demanded Ichabod, eagerly.

"Yarw; unt he haf a scar on dis cheek vat coes from his chin to his eye like dis."

Hans drew his finger over his own face, showing the direction of the scar.

"Scar Face, by the hokies!" ejaculated Ichabod. "This looks bad, James; this looks awful bad. That Injun, ef yew must know it, is the Huron I told ye about, and a most ow-dashus cuss he is, too. Now I don't like it that my lodger sh'u'd be consorting with a bloody Canada red-skin."

"I think that there is no doubt of his character. Shall you tax him with it when he returns?"

"Not yit; don't let the critter suspect that we know his tricks, Hans?"

"Yaw, Mynheer."

"Don't let on to this chap what you know, but watch him, night and day. Can you do this?"

"Vell, I dink so."

"Can you go without sleep?"

"No; I ton't t'ink, I could, any vay, put I vakes up blenty dimes ven I vant to."

"Do your best, my boy, and your reward shall be ample," said Seaman. "I suppose you don't object to earning five pounds."

Hans broke into a short laugh. It was more money than he had ever owned at one time in his life.

"Dry me, and see," he said.

"Then don't sleep too much this week, my boy, and if we run this fox down you shall have the money. As earnest of what I mean to do, here is one pound to begin with."

He put the coin into the hand of the fat boy, who looked at it with ill-concealed delight.

"I remempers you, mynheer," he said, "but I tint out all about dot Shwinton. I don't like him any vay. He vas a pig vool; dot ish vat I dinks."

The young Dutchman turned away, opening his hand at every step to look at the money in it, closing his hand immediately for fear it would escape.

"I am glad Hans took it into his head to follow Swinton," said Seaman. "There is the making of a man in that fat boy."

"There is the making of *two* men," said Ichabod, laughing. "The boy is smarter than he looks, and he'll make that critter trouble—you see if he don't."

It was after dark when Swinton returned, loaded with game, which he threw carelessly down at the kitchen door.

Having done this, he entered the house and looked somewhat annoyed at seeing Seaman by the side of Bessie and evidently established in her good graces, for she was listening smilingly to an account of a boyish escapade upon the Hudson. She rose and introduced the young men, who looked askance at one another as they rose to bow. But they did not shake hands; each had an instinctive distrust of the other.

"I met Mr. Swinton in the woods some time ago," remarked Seaman. "He was apparently waiting for some one."

"No, no," returned Swinton, hurriedly. "I merely sat down at that place to rest. You have just come up the river, I suppose?"

"Not long since," replied Seaman.

"Any news?" persisted the other, drawing his chair close to the pair. "Come, be good-natured. Remember that I have been in the woods a long time, and that old news is news to me."

"I had heard a rumor that a General named Burgoyne was hemmed in by the American forces, somewhere about Saratoga, and was likely to be cut off."

"False!" cried Swinton, half-starting from his chair. "The ragged—excuse me, sir, but you took me by surprise with your absurd rumor, and I see that you are smiling."

"Seems to me, fur a *neutral*, you take a heap of interest in Burgoyne's army, Mister Swinton," remarked Ichabod.

"I am a neutral, as I said, but my sympathies are not with the Colonies," replied the hunter. "You are trying to crowd me into a corner, and I may as well give my real sentiments."

"Your real sentiments are pizen," retorted Ichabod. "Hyar's a man has jest sent six sons to the front, and that man don't like yer sentiments. They ain't right; they ain't just, cuss 'em. It is well I didn't know yer ideas, or mebber I wouldn't hev asked ye to come hyar."

"Sent six sons, Mr. Salmon? Why, have you got twelve?"

"No, I ain't; ef I'd got twelve I'd send jest a dozen, and make it a baker's dozen by going myself. Thar; don't let's

talk about this or I'll get mad. What luck did ye have on the hunt?"

"I got a good lot of ducks and plover," answered Ralph. "If there's any thing on earth I envy this country, it is the abundance of noble game with which its forests and plains are peopled. There is no such region on earth."

"That's so, stranger," said the old scout. "It's a beautiful kentry, and we all love it, and no cussed king on the face o' the airth ain't going to take it from us. Supper on the table, old lady? I ain't got the heart to eat much to-night, ez the boys are gone."

The table did look solitary, without the six tall young men. Mrs. Salmon tried to eat, but put the food away with loathing. Bessie had no appetite, and the two young men, understanding her grief, made themselves as agreeable as possible. But she would think of her brave brothers making their camp that night under the trees to the east, on their road to Schuyler.

"Mynheer," cried Hans, at the door. "Come here unt look."

They hurried to the door and saw a red glare upon the sky, miles away.

"The work of the Tories," cried Seaman, raising his hand. "St. Leger and Johnson are here."

Swinton spoke not, but his eyes were fixed upon the distant light, with a strange gleam in their depths. "They are coming," he muttered. "Coming—sooner than I thought."

CHAPTER V.

THE INTERVIEW IN THE WOOD.

SILVER VOICE was joined by her husband shortly after he separated from the white men upon the point. The brave young chief was in deep thought, and as they made a shelter for the night, in a secluded nook by the lake, and drew up the canoes out of reach of the water, he did not speak, as

something was evidently working in his mind, and the Indian woman knew better than to ask him questions, so she quietly assisted him in preparing a camp. This done, he took her bow and shot some squirrels, which he quickly prepared for roasting, while she built a fire under the bank where it could not be seen from a distance. She still feared that Scar Face was in the woods and knew his vindictive nature but too well. While the squirrels were cooking, Mossfoot did not speak, but stood wrapped in his blanket, leaning against a tree. When the first squirrel was cooked, she laid it on a clean piece of bark and gave it to him with a smile.

"Let Silver Voice eat," he said, kindly. "Mossfoot is a man; he can wait."

Unlike most Indians, he knew the courtesy which is due to woman, and he loved Silver Voice, dearly.

"Eat, chief of my heart," she said, softly. "Did you not fight to-day for my sake, and beat your enemy?"

"Mossfoot will wade in blood to save the Silver Voice," said the Oneida. "But we have done wrong to let Scar Face go back to the Hurons. He is a snake with a bad heart, and will do us wrong."

He said no more, but took the squirrel which his wife pressed upon him, and began to eat. They made their simple meal in silence, and when this was done, she made a cup of her hand, and carried a little water to his lips with a touching grace, laughing merrily as she did so. He drank the water with a loving look, which sat well upon his noble face, and then, lighting a pipe, the bowl of which was carved from red sandstone, and the stem of reed, he began to smoke, blowing the smoke through his nostrils after the Indian fashion.

"Hard Heart is in the Oneida country," he said, at length. "Why has he come, if not to ask the Oneidas to fight?"

"Does Mossfoot love Hard Heart?" said Silver Voice.

The Indian shook his head.

"Once, in her own country, Hard Heart spoke wicked words in the ear of Silver Voice, and she hates him, though she was but a child. The white dog thinks that an Indian girl can not remember, but she knew him."

"Mossfoot will take the scalp of a dog," the chief cried,

fiercely, removing his pipe from his mouth. "Ha! A voice calls me, and I smell blood in the air!"

"Not now!" plead the girl, placing her hand upon his arm. "The time will come soon, when blood must flow, and the young warriors will go out to the battle. Let Mossfoot promise one thing—Bessie shall be saved."

"It is good; Mossfoot loves the old hunter and his people. They have always a warm place by the fire when he comes and the little maid does not fear to put her hand in his arm—Welcome, Oneida."

The girl nodded slowly, and a look of deep joy came into her eyes.

"Mossfoot is right," she said; "let him beware of the Hard Heart, who is a dog and deserves death. Let him beware, too, of Scar Face, who will come with his braves. The old Mohawk father, Johnson, will come and all his green-coats with him, and the water of the river will be red."

"Does the wife of Mossfoot see all this in the sky?"

"Yes," she replied. "The spirit of my mother, the prophetess is upon me, and bids me speak. Blood will flow, but the blue-coats will send the red and green flying from the field."

"Ha! do you see this?"

"This; and more. Many Indians will come down to fight against the blue-coats, but I see their crests in the dust. They will fight at Oriskany, and at Oriskany they will die."

Silver Voice was the daughter of a prophetess of the Hurons. Whether she possessed the power she claimed can not now be said, but certain it is that in this she was right, for she foretold a struggle which was soon to come. Mossfoot had the utmost faith in her predictions, and it decided his which side to espouse.

He made a gesture of wonder, and knocking the ashes from his pipe signified his intention of going on a short scout, leaving her in that sheltered place, with instructions to remain quiet, and neither by look or word to give any inkling of her place of hiding. He departed silently and swiftly, and she was left alone.

Silver Voice was a brave-hearted woman, to whom solitude was no new thing; so she sat in the shadow, looking out

across the lake, and waiting for her husband's return without a thought of fear. In a half dream she forgot her usual caution, and was aroused by a sudden rush of feet to find herself in the clasp of a strong arm, and was dragged out into the moonlight, where she beheld the ferocious face of the Huron chief.

"Ha!" he said fiercely, clasping her strongly by the left wrist. "Scar Face is not a fool to give up that which is his."

Silver Voice reached over her shoulder to her quiver, and drew out an arrow with which she made a sudden thrust at the bosom of the Huron. A barbed arrow is a dangerous weapon in a skillful hand, light as it is, and only the swift turn of the Huron's body saved him from instant death. As it was the arrow passed completely through the muscles of his back, entering just below the shoulder as he swung his body round. It was well for Silver Voice that the chief had but one hand which he could use, for in his rage at that moment he would have slain her, had he dared to release her long enough to reach for a weapon. He ground his white teeth furiously, and wrenched her arm so hard as to extort from her a cry of pain. Then, releasing her hand suddenly he snatched the quiver from her back and again seized her, and to his surprise Silver Voice commenced to laugh, and the chief grew more furious than ever.

"Does Silver Voice dare to laugh at a Huron chief?" he hissed.

"Why did Scar Face come upon me like a thief in the night?" she said. "His voice once was pleasant in the ears of Silver Voice, but how could she know him in the darkness?"

He looked at her doubtfully, for he could not understand this sudden change.

"Let not Silver Voice speak with a double tongue," he said slowly. "If she hates Scar Face, it is better to say it."

"Why should I hate Scar Face?" she said, quietly. "Was he not the pride of the Hurons, and the bravest among the war chiefs of the north? Go; your eyes are blind or you would see that I feared Mossfoot, and dared not speak kindly to you."

The savage countenance of Scar Face lighted up with an expression of surprise and delight, and he slowly released his hold on the girl and looked at her fixedly.

"It is a long path to the Huron village, and the feet of Silver Voice would tire by the way, yet she must not stay in the lodges of the Oneidas. Will Silver Voice return with her chief, and forget the Oneidas?"

But Silver Voice was only waiting for an opportunity to escape. As the last word left his lips she leaped suddenly down the bank, and grasping a projecting root swung herself up again, but on the other side of a great tree which stood close to the bank. In his first surprise, the chief had followed her down the bank, but with his wounded arm he was obliged to move more slowly in climbing up again, expecting to find Silver Voice gone. But when he reached the top of the bank he met her face to face as she stood with an arrow fitted to the string, and her unflinching eyes looking into his.

"Back, Huron!" she cried. "Silver Voice is the wife of a chief, who would tear your heart bleeding from your breast if he knew that you had insulted his wife by the touch of your hand."

Words are inadequate to describe the rage of Scar Face, who saw the woman he had deemed so weak suddenly assume the offensive. Yet he knew that her aim was certain at that distance, and she would have no hesitation in shooting him down like a dog if he made any movement toward her. He stood upon the crest of the bank, beaten, baffled, and at the mercy of Silver Voice.

"Look," she said; "I might kill you; but Mossfoot gave you life, and I will not take it."

He hesitated; but at that moment he heard in the distance the signal of Mossfoot on his return. He felt that in his present weak state he was no match for the athletic Oneida, and he turned to go.

"Wait," he said, turning back. "The moon will not change once before I will wear the scalp of Mossfoot in my girdle, and take you into my lodge. But I will not keep you long, for the hand which is red with the blood of a Huron chief can not remain long above the grass."

"Go!" she repeated, raising the point of the arrow a little.

"Wait; Mossfoot is coming, and you need not fear. Across the lake is a white man's house—the house of the hunter who came to us by the lake and would not let Mossfoot kill me. I do not thank him for my life, because he is the friend of Mossfoot. He and all his family shall die!"

Silver Voice, with an angry exclamation, drew back her hand a little, preparatory to loosing the shaft, but he raised his hand in a gesture of haughty defiance, and was gone. Quick as thought, she darted after him, and followed until certain that he had no thought of returning, when she hurried back to the lake and met Mossfoot on his return.

"Hard Heart and Scar Face have met already," said the chief. "Evil comes to the Oneidas when both these men are here."

"Come into the canoe," she said, hurriedly. "Let us make another camp."

"Why does Silver Voice say this?" demanded the chief.

"Because a shot from the bush can kill," was the reply. "Let us go."

They entered the canoes, and keeping well in the shadow of the banks, at last landed in a sheltered spot, and made another camp, where they remained until morning, when, for the first time, Silver Voice told her husband why she had asked him to move his camp on the previous night.

Mossfoot was very angry with her at first, but a moment's reflection convinced him that a chase after the Huron in the darkness would have been as likely to result in his own death as that of Scar Face. But he gloried in the noble conduct of his wife in the encounter with the chief, which she recounted modestly but truthfully.

"Silver Voice has a brave heart," he said. "Now let her go to the Oneida village, and wait there for the coming of Mossfoot, who has work to do."

The Indian wife inclined her head obediently, and was moving away sadly, when he called her back and touched her forehead with his lips in a gentle manner.

"Mossfoot is not angry with his wife," he said. "Go, you are worthy to be the wife of a chief."

She took her canoe and went on her way. The chief crossed to the other shore, landing a short distance from the

house of Salmon, where he lay in ambush until he saw Ralph leave the house, with his gun upon his shoulder. Then, keeping near him, but shielding himself behind the trees, the Indian followed until they had passed over several miles of forest, and were out of the possibility of being interrupted, when he suddenly appeared before Ralph, making a friendly gesture.

The white man had half-raised his rifle on the appearance of the chief; but recognizing him, he dropped the butt of the weapon to the earth and stood leaning on it.

"Hi, there, Oneida!" he said. "Whither are you bound?"

"Mossfoot has come to speak with Hard Heart," said the Oneida, quietly.

Ralph started and looked amazed, as this name was given him by the young chief, and looked quickly about to see that no one was listening.

"My Indian name," he cried. "Silence, for I would not have one of these accursed Whigs hear it, or my doom would be the swinging bough of the first tree. How came you to know me?"

"Hard Heart has been at Albany," continued Mossfoot. "He was there when Mossfoot went to talk with the great father; he was at Schenectady last snow, when Mossfoot was there. Hard Heart is a wanderer, and his name and fame are known among the Six Nations."

"Now, look you, Oneida," said Ralph, "do you know why I have come into the Indian country?"

"Mossfoot can guess," replied the Oneida. "Our great father in Canada is sending his warriors down from the North, but they are not enough, and he wants the aid of the Indians."

"You are right," exclaimed Ralph, eagerly. "His Indian brothers have always found the great father a prompt paymaster. What he promises he does; he will make Mossfoot the richest of all the chiefs of the Six Nations if he will do what he can to make the Oneidas take up the hatchet."

"The Hurons can be bought with blankets and beads," said Mossfoot. "The Six Nations are rich now and ask no more."

"But we will give you everything you ask," cried Swinton.

"Who shall say which is the better master for us or the better friend, the red-coat or the blue?" persisted the Oneida.

"Mossfoot must be very foolish not to see that the great father is very rich, and the Yankees very poor."

"But the Yankees can fight," suggested the chief. "Look: when Sir William fought the great battle at Fort Henry, his men were Yankees. When the great chief Braddock fought in the Delaware country his men were red-coats. But the red-coats were beaten and the Yankees were not."

"I see that you are inclined to be a friend to the Yankees," replied Ralph, knitting his brows. "Beware what you do, or the vengeance of the great father will be strong against you."

"Ha!" cried Mossfoot, fiercely. "Does Hard Heart think to frighten Mossfoot with hard words?"

"No, no," protested Ralph, hurriedly. "Let us say no more, now, only tell me when you will meet me at the point where you fought the Huron?"

"I can not tell. So Scar Face is a friend of the English?"

"Yes."

"Ugh! he is a snake without a sting, but I will make him no better than a dead dog. Mossfoot can never be a friend to Scar Face."

"We have to use the Hurons," explained Ralph, "because they have always been friendly to us. But what should we care for them if the Oneidas were on our side."

"Mossfoot will come to the point at sunrise, in three days," the chief declared, at length, turning to depart.

At this moment a loud crash was heard and the sound of a heavy fall, and, darting in the direction of the sound, they found Hans Puffer up to his waist in a sort of quicksand, the green covering of which had deceived him.

"You villain," roared Swinton, raising his gun to beat out his brains. "You have been spying upon me, have you?"

Mossfoot quietly put aside the weapon, while Hans looked the picture of innocence.

"Shpy! Who sez I vas shpy? Dot vas a lie, off effer dere vas a lie mit der vorld. I was look for sassafras."

"Oh!" said Ralph. "I wish I could believe you."

"Pelieve me! Vas you pelieve your Piple ven you reats him? I dells you I vas yoost so innocent vat nefer vas. Vy den you don't bull me ous? Bull me ous, I dells you. I don't vool mid you ven I dells you dot I wants to be bulled out mid dis blace."

"I have good mind to shoot you through the head and take the chances of a mistake," grumbled Ralph, as, with the Indian, he lent a hand in dragging the fat boy out of his berth in the sandy ooze. He did not present a very neat appearance as he came out.

"Dere, py cracious!" he exclaimed; "I vas a vool ven I valls in dot blaces; mooch oblige, mynheer; I nefer could got ous mit mineself."

"I care very little for your thanks. Do I understand you to say that it is settled, Oneida? Will you meet me at the point, for the hunt you spoke of?"

The chief nodded, and, turning away, Swinton was quickly lost in the woods. Hans grinned widely and applying the thumb of his left hand to his flat nose, ground an imaginary mill with the other. Having thus relieved his mind he turned with an aspect of intense gravity to the Indian.

CHAPTER VI.

A MYSTERIOUS SCOUT.

"Dot veller vas pig vools, Mossfoot," he said, confidentially. "He vood haf knock ous mine prains off it vas not for you."

"Hans got *heap* of prains, eh?" said the chief, in his broken English, a smile upon his face.

"I got plenty prains vor me," rejoined Hans; "dot vas

all I vas care apout. Now yoost you listen vile I spoke mit you liddle dimes. Dot vellers moost co away out of dis."

"Hard Heart *heap* bad!" said Mossfoot, gravely. "He better go away."

"Off he ton't co away right away, quick, den I vas make him, dot vas all. Vy, ton't you know dot all dem poys gone away mit dere guns to fight mit dem Sbonsons? I nefer likes dem Sbonsons ven dey vash here, unt I ton't like dem any petter ven dey vash coom pack. Now you co vere you vas coing, I vill see vat he vas doing."

The two separated, and while Hans followed the trail of Ralph Swinton, the Indian went quietly toward the house. He had considerable faith in the scouting ability of Hans, and was a little surprised to see him trapped in the quicksand. But the Dutchman was now on his guard and followed the trail in a steady, noiseless way, hardly to be looked for in one of his build.

Swinton was in a bad humor. He began to fear that it would not be easy to win the Oneida over, and without him, one of the most eloquent orators, as well as best of the fighting chiefs of the tribe, he could not hope to do much with that nation. He was puzzled about Hans, too, and could not help wondering how he came to be so near him. After a walk of about two miles he came to a large tree standing in the midst of a little opening. This tree was old, knotted, and cross-grained, with ragged openings about the roots. Looking carefully about him for a moment, he put his hand in one of these openings, and drew out three pieces of bark painted in various colors upon the inner surface.

"They have been here," he muttered. "Now to call them in."

Thrusting his hand into his bosom, he drew out a piece of bone, rudely-cut into the shape of a whistle, and blew through it, a single sharp, clear call. It was answered a moment later, and presently three men emerged from the woods to the right. Two of them were Hurons—one a chief; and the other was a white man, in the dress of "Butler's Rangers"—that terrible organization which worked so much evil in New York during the Revolution. He was a man somewhat past the

middle age, with heavy, cruel features—evidently one in authority.

"Well, Ralph, my boy—what luck?"

"Not much to speak of, colonel," was the reply. "I am dead tired of this sort of work and want active service."

"You'll get that sooner than you want it, perhaps. I have been down the river in disguise, and I'll be cursed if I ever saw any thing like the way these villainous Whigs hang together. And as for our family—why, ten thousand curses on them, you would think the Butlers and Johnsons nothing less than fiends from the pit. What have you been doing, all this time?"

"Umph! Very little, if I must say it. I have just met Mossfoot, the Oneida, and—"

"Ugh!" grunted the Indian. "Mossfoot is a dog, and the Herons want his scalp to hang on a pole."

"I am a little afraid that you will have a chance. The truth of the matter is, the Oneida is altogether too thick with the Salmon family, a lot of audacious Whigs, the father of whom is that old scout and hunter who was out with Putnam and his rangers so long. I have arranged a meeting with him on the lake shore, and if he does not fall into our plans I shall be tempted to give him a blue pill."

"Take Edistah with you when you meet him," said the man in uniform, "and he will be glad to attend to the Oneida."

The eyes of the savage twinkled, and it was plain that he intended to destroy the Oneida, if the opportunity offered.

"These Salmons must be put down, though," declared Swinton. "Just think of a single family sending out six stout soldiers, armed and equipped, to join the force of that old villain, Herkimer. Yet this was done only yesterday."

"And the old man?"

"He won't be far behind them, for he has the fighting-blood in him yet, and is one of the best scouts in the colony."

At this moment the eyes of the Indian began to glitter, and he moved closer to the others, and made a gesture for silence.

"Something make noise," he whispered. "Spy, maybe."

"If it should be that cursed young Dutchman!" hissed Swinton, through his set teeth; "I will never forgive you if you do not take his scalp. Don't let him see that we suspect, Edistah; but get around in the rear somehow."

They appeared to converse for a few moments, and then the Indian said, in a loud voice:

"Good-by, brudders; me go back." He turned and disappeared in the woods on the left, leaving the white men lounging under the great tree. Soon after, they sat down upon a log together, and conversed in such low tones that their voices could not reach the nearest point in the woods which might conceal an enemy. In the mean time, the Huron made a circuit through the woods and then turned a sharp angle and pursued a course which must bring him across any fresh trail which approached the place of rendezvous. His eyes were fixed upon the earth as he proceeded, and soon an expression of delight crossed his dark face, as he struck the trail of Ralph Swinton, and saw, mixed with his trail, but above it, the marks of a ponderous foot.

"Ha!" he hissed, grasping his hatchet, firmly. "A Huron smells blood."

He began to follow the trail with Indian caution and patience, but rapidly, noting as he advanced, that the trail grew fresher, and must have been made during the last half-hour. He was now within a hundred yards of the opening and began to creep forward with extreme caution, neither stirring a leaf nor breaking a twig. So slow was his advance, indeed, that he scarcely seemed to move at all, but by slow degrees worked his way onward until he reached a great log over which Ralph Swinton had stepped as he proceeded. Raising his head, inch by inch, the Huron looked over the log confidently, expecting to see the enemy he sought within a few feet, watching the white men in the opening. But, to his utter surprise, no one was in sight. The trail of Ralph Swinton was plain before him, but he no longer saw the marks of those ponderous feet.

What could it mean?

Up to the side of the log under which he lay concealed, the double trail was plain, but here it ended as completely as if the heavy scout had vanished into thin air. Edistah was

an accomplished trailer, and to say that he was puzzled would be putting it very mildly indeed. He looked to the right hand and to the left, but the trail was completely lost. He looked along the log but there was no mark upon it which could guide him, for it was a heavy pine from which the bark had fallen, so that a step upon it would make no trail.

"Wagh!" ejaculated Edistah. "White scout fly away like bird."

The Indian was hardly to be blamed if he confidently believed this to be the fact. He looked back at the trail and again examined it to see if the scout had doubled back on the track, and escaped in that manner, but the footmarks all pointed toward the opening. He even looked to see if the impression of the heel was heavier than the toe, as it would have been had the scout walked backward, but such was not the case. He was completely baffled, and could see no way out of the dilemma, and showing himself at the edge of the woods he beckoned the others to approach.

"Seen any thing, Edistah?" asked the man in green.

The Indian shook his head, slowly.

"Bah; you have found a mare's nest, my good fellow," said Ralph. "You were mistaken about the noise."

Edistah again shook his head, this time with a sullen look. He did not like to have his scouting abilities doubted, and signing to them to follow and carefully avoiding the trail, so that it should not be obliterated, he showed them the marks of the heavy foot.

"Moccasin," he said. "Big foot; foot like young canoe."

"That's so," confessed Ralph, with a puzzled look. "This Dutchman wore moccasins, and I don't think there is a man with as large a foot in the colony. Curse the luck, Edistah he must be hiding somewhere."

"Where he go, then?" demanded Edistah. "Trail go up to log; go no further."

They again advanced and looked closely at the log, and could see no further signs of the mysterious scout.

"If it were any one in the world except that big Dutchman," said Ralph, in a rage, "I should not be so puzzled. But where could a man of his size hide without leaving a trail? Sound the log, Butler; perhaps it is hollow."

The man in green kicked the log with his heavy boot, but no hollow sound came back. Ralph looked at the butt and saw that it was sound.

"Pshaw, Edistah, you *must* have been mistaken. There is no one here at all, nor has there been."

The Indian cast a sour look at the speaker but made no reply.

Ralph stepped on the log, and walked along the bare trunk as far as he could go, but could see nothing to indicate the presence of Hans Phiffer. Yet the trail was so much like the one his foot would make, that he was at a loss. The others had followed him on each side of the log, and he stood leaning against a giant sycamore which grew up close to the yellow pine.

"Let us end this foolishness," he commanded. "You may go back and tell the General that if, after three weeks, I do not manage this affair in the way he desires, I will come back and meet him after he invests Schuyler. You may leave Edistah with me."

"Good-by, then, my boy," exclaimed Butler. "Take care of yourself, and don't let Salmon suspect you, or you may see the inside of a Whig prison."

"I'll take the chances on that," retorted Ralph, laughing. "It won't be much of a trick to pull the wool over the eyes of my good friend, Ichabod. I have been *honest* with him, you understand, and have frankly told him that my sympathies are with the king."

"I should think they were," and Butler echoed his laugh. "Good-by, again. I have quite a long ride before I reach my party."

He turned and crossed the opening at a rapid pace, leaving Edistah and Ralph Swinton standing by the log.

"Do you know the long point on the north shore of the lake, where the three pines grow, Edistah?" demanded Ralph.

The Indian nodded by way of reply, but did not deem it necessary to speak.

"Very well. Be there at sunrise on the third day, and hide in the bushes. I will meet Mossfoot and have a talk with him, and if he refuses to join us I will take my cap in my

hand in this way, and run my fingers through my hair. When I do that, if you want to kill Mossfoot, you *may*."

An expression of almost demoniac joy crossed the dark face of the Huron; he would win undying honor with his tribe if he carried the scalp of this noted chief to his village. Few words were needed to cement the bloody compact, and the Indian started away to the west, while Ralph, dropping the barrel of his rifle into the hollow of his arm, set out on his return to Salmon's. When they were fairly out of sight there was a slight rustling sound at the root of the gigantic sycamore, two or three huge limbs which seemed to have fallen across the roots were pushed aside, and the huge head of Hans Phiffer was thrust up from a wide opening between the roots. His mouth was distended by a knowing grin, for he took great credit to himself in having outwitted the party who had tried to trail him.

"Dot Injun wanted my scalp so pad vot nefer vas," he chuckled. "Put he ton't get it unless I peen ashleep, unt I ton't vant to shleep no more. Dot vas pad mans, dot veller vat call hisself Shwinton. I proke his het mit so many as tri, swansey bieces—vun of dese tays."

Soliloquizing in this way, Hans replaced the branches so as to hide the opening between the roots, whistling softly, a habit he had contracted from being so much alone in the woods. This done, he took up his rifle and prepared for a march.

"It vas lucky I vas so near my pear dree," he muttered. "Ofe it vas not for dot, I vas hafe to fite mit dot red vellers. I kills him, dot vas all rite, unt den I vas hafe to run like ter tuyfel, unt I ton't feel like dis runnin'; I vas nefer built for dot."

Throwing his rifle across his shoulder and taking a path through the woods which he knew would soon place him far in advance of Ralph Swinton, he set out for home. Nor was he mistaken, for he came in nearly half an hour ahead of Swinton, who was somewhat surprised to see the Dutchman seated in the shadow of the house in company with Mossfoot, smoking a pipe. His clothing still showed the marks of his tumble in the marsh, but he greeted Ralph with ready good-nature. As the Englishman had marched rapidly, and did

not think the Dutchman capable of competing with him in pedestrianism, he at once decided that they must have been mistaken in supposing that Hans had been trailing them. Mossfoot greeted Ralph serenely, and he passed on into the house.

"All right," he thought. "I have accused the Dutchman wrongfully."

Mr. Ralph Swinton might have changed his opinion if he had seen the pantomime in which Hans indulged the moment his back was turned. Taking the pipe from his mouth, he winked with such surpassing slyness that even the stoical Indian was nearly moved to open laughter.

"Oh, yaw! I vas a vool, yoost so sure vat nefer vas. Oh gootness crashus, vat a vool I peen!"

"My brother does not say good words," rejoined Mossfoot. "His ears are always open."

"Dey vas pig enuff," protested Hans. "Put yoost listen mit me. I voller dot man unt I nefer leafs him, dell I sees him in shail mit a chain on his leg unt a pall on der chain. Dot vas so."

CHAPTER VII.

THE FAT CHAMPION.

JOSEPH SEAMAN and Mossfoot had arranged an expedition to meet in secret with some of the chiefs of the Oneidas. They left the house, just after the arrival of Swinton, accompanied by Ichabod, leaving Hans Phiffer in charge of the farm. The young Dutchman had risen considerably in the estimation of his employers for his conduct during the past few days, and had unearthed a mine of scouting knowledge which had been unlooked-for in him. Swinton noted, not without alarm, that Ichabod looked at him with suspicion.

"I'm goin' away, Mr. Swinton," he said, tapping his rifle, "but I'm a-comin' back. Don't forgit yerself while I'm gone."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Oh, nuthin', nuthin'. Ef you don't understand now you never will, and I only say, *don't* forgit yourself."

"Has that Whig surgeon been poisoning your mind against me?" demanded Ralph.

"Whig surgeon, Mr. Swinton?" said that person, suddenly appearing. "That is a strange term from the mouth of a *neutral*."

"I don't propose to have my words taken up in that way, by any disciple of Galen who may see proper to interfere with my business," retorted Ralph. "If you have any thing more to say upon the subject, I shall feel called upon to inquire why you do it."

"I shall be ready to answer for my words, at any time," and Seaman laid his hand upon his sword-hilt. "I hope you understand me."

"Shut up!" ordered Ichabod, thrusting the young surgeon back with his left hand. "I won't have no quarreling here—not a bit. I've only got *this* to say: that ef you go out with Joe Seaman tew a little tea-party you'll come back on a board."

"You shall hear of me hereafter," threatened Swinton. "At present I will not violate the hospitality of this house, especially as there are ladies here."

"You orter thought of that before you commenced a quarrel," suggested Ichabod. "Come along, Mossy; we've got a long trail afore us."

"Now for an interview with my forest beauty," thought Ralph, as soon as they had disappeared. He had seen Bessie, after bidding her father good-by, go down to the green point near the boats, where she sat out of sight of the house, concealed by the bank. The young Tory, for such he was, no doubt, arose and followed her. She sat upon a large stone, with her head upon her hand, evidently in deep thought.

"A guinea for your thoughts, Bessie," he said, approaching suddenly. "May I hope that they were of me?"

"They are hardly worth the money, Mr. Swinton," she said, without showing the annoyance she felt at the intrusion. "And they were *not* of you."

"Cruel!" and approaching her he dropped in a languishing

attitude at her feet. "I had hoped that you had some pity on me."

"Mr. Swinton, we are plain farmers here, and do not understand fine speeches, especially from people who regard themselves as high above us in social rank. Probably among those of your own class a compliment of that kind—for I suppose you intended it for a compliment—might meet with approval, but it is lost upon me."

"You think that I am not in earnest," he said, eagerly, "but I assure you upon my honor that I have been so impressed by your beauty and graces, by the charm of your conversation, that—"

"I am satisfied that you desire to pass an idle hour in trifling with a country girl, whose very name would be forgotten when our troops drive you back to Canada. You may be able to deceive others, sir, but to me it is plain that you are not only an English gentleman, but one who has mixed much with what is falsely called good society. I do not wish to speak about this, any more, for I do not care to be made the plaything of an hour."

"You wrong me more than words can express," he protested. "My love for you has been a plant of quick growth, but it is not the less ardent and sincere. I will not deny that I am an Englishman. Indeed, you have already heard me say that my sympathies are with the king and his cause. But, what I am, need not interfere with the love I bear you."

"I will return to the house, Mr. Swinton," and Bessie rose to her feet, with an angry flush in her face. "I can not consent to be made sport of by a stranger."

"Stay!" he said, rising to interrupt her. "You regard my love as an insult, and yet there are many who would be proud to link their fortunes with mine. Yes, by Heaven, say that you will love me and I will marry you."

"Thanks; I decline. The very manner of your offer is insulting. Stand aside and permit me to pass."

He caught her hand in his, and would have passed his arm about her waist to detain her, but at this moment a powerful hand was laid upon his collar and he was dragged back with a force which he could not resist, and found it difficult to keep his feet.

"You gone away now so quick vat ever you can, mynheer. I ton't spoke mit you many dimes apout it, needer!" and Hans Phiffer's eyes flashed ominously.

"You scoundrel!" roared Swinton. "How dare you interfere with me?"

"I ton't vant to dalk mit you apout dot, mynheer," replied Hans, "put vat I dinks is dis: you petter leaf dot young fraulein alone py herself, unt go apout your own puishniss unt den you done putty vell."

"I will take it upon myself to wring your Dutch neck," said Swinton, advancing.

"Ton't you dry it. Mine Teuch neck ton't vant no wringing, ton't I tole you. You petter keep away or pimepye mebbe you gets hurt mit yourself."

But Swinton approached and seized the Dutchman by the shoulders with the intenton of hurling him to the earth. At first Hans only offered passive resistance, standing with a smile upon his broad, pleasant Teutonic face, while Swinton tugged and strained in the endeavor to overthrow him.

"You make yourself all tire oud off you ton't shtop," he said, quietly. "Vat you vas dry to do, anyvay?"

Still Swinton tugged away, but he might as well have attempted to move a rock. Hans evidently enjoyed his efforts, until Ralph released his hand and struck him in the face. The Englishman then experienced a new sensation, for Hans drew back his ponderous fist and landed it with the force of a catapult upon the tip of his nasal organ, sending him neatly to the earth, doubting whether he had not received the shock of an earthquake.

"I ton't vant to fool mid you now," said Hans, who did not exhibit the least sign of anger. "Put off you ton't gone away I pound so pooty bad; dot vas all."

But Swinton was a man skilled in the "manly art," and would not yield to a boy. Forgetting the presence of Bessie, and only desirous of wreaking vengeance upon the unhappy Dutchman, he rushed upon the immovable Teuton with his hands raised in a highly scientific manner. Regardless of science, Hans put his blow aside, and again landed him on mother earth. He rolled over, half rose, and drew a pistol; but Bessie threw herself between them.

Coward!" she cried.

ward! At that word his hand dropped from the pistol and, taking out his handkerchief, he wiped away the blood which flowed from a cut in his lip; his eyes never left the face of Hans Phiffer, and the Dutchman knew that if day ever came when he was in that man's power, he could not hope for mercy.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Bessie," he said, in a strangely smooth, even tone, considering the passion he was in, "but, I was taken so completely by surprise by the brutal attack of this young scoundrel that I forgot myself for a moment."

"You need say no more, sir. Hans was justified in what he did."

"In striking me—a gentleman!"

"Did you not strike him first?"

"No matter for that. Oh, my dear fellow, if we ever meet in a place where I can repay you for this, how happy I shall be to discharge the debt I owe you."

"Vat's der use of dalking?" demanded Hans. "I ton't want to fite mit you, put ven a mans hits me on der face I vas goin' to hit him on der nose, unt dot vas rite, too, myn-heer. Salmon dell me to keep an eye on Miss Pessie, unt I keeps du eyes on her, py crashus! Dere, vy ton't you gone away?"

"I am going at once. Miss Bessie, will you send this young man to the house after my rifle and pack?"

"I vont leaf Miss Pessie."

"I give my word of honor, as a gentleman, that I will not touch you nor seek for vengeance on this ruffian to-day, if you will let him go."

"Go, Hans," commanded Bessie. "I am not afraid of him."

Hans sprung up the bank very quickly for a man of his weight, and Swinton turned to Bessie.

"I am sorry that this happened," he said, "for I believe that I could have used arguments which would have made you think better of me than any country clodhopper who may have your fancy now. I am so far independent of society that I can offer you a place which you can grace better than

the wife of any man in his majesty's service. As my wife, you will be a leader in society, which I am not vain in calling the best on this continent."

"You are wasting time, Mr. Swinton," returned Bessie, proudly. "You are an enemy of my country, and for that reason alone I could not love you; here is Hans with your weapons and pack."

"A moment more. You must think twice before you refuse an offer which I may one day have the power to enforce. I am not what I seem, and may bring fire and sword into this peaceful region. I have a name all-powerful among the Indians, and they will rally at my call, and woe to all upon the trail over which they pass."

"Go!" cried Bessie, raising her hand. "You see the road before you; take it."

"I have my dismissal. Now hear me, for I give you a warning: when you hear that the Mohawks are on the trail, that the Senecas lap blood, and the Valley is in a flame, you will know that I am with them. Then you may well tremble for yourself and all who bear your name."

He slung his pack over his shoulder, took up his rifle, and with a glance of concentrated hate and venom at the immovable Hans, took his course along the lake shore without pausing to look back. Bessie drew a long breath of relief.

"I am glad he is gone," she said. "I am sure that he is a bold, bad man, who would stop at nothing to accomplish his purpose."

"I dells you vat it is, fraulein, dot man pesser look a liddle oud, or von of dem dimes I proke his neck. Dot va all!"

"I hope that we may never see him again. Why have you taken your rifle, Hans; surely you are not going away?"

"I vant to be sure off dot mans gone away," replied Hans. "You keep der house unt off you sees anypoddy you ton't know yoost you shut der doors unt keep dem oud."

He was gone about an hour and came back, at a quick pace, having followed Ralph for some distance and satisfied himself that he did not intend any treachery.

It was late in the second day when Seaman and Ichabod

returned, and their faces showed that their mission had been successful. By the aid of Mossfoot they had induced the Oneida chiefs to make a treaty of peace with the Americans, although they could not answer for some of the younger malcontents, who would fight only for glory and scalps.

Mossfoot returned to the Oneida village, and remained there till early morning. At sunrise he was upon the lake in his canoe, not far from the point where the meeting with Ralph Swinton was to take place. The face of the young chief was sternly set, and he was fully armed, looking the picture of a chivalric warrior. Scarcely had he landed and given the appointed signal, when Ralph Swinton appeared from a cluster of trees a few yards away, and came hastily forward to meet him.

"My brother is here, as he promised," said Mossfoot, in the Oneida language. "Has he come with an open heart to meet the young war-chief of the Oneidas?"

"Why not?" asked Ralph, with a furtive glance about him. "Has not my family been friendly to the Six Nations for many years?"

"Hard Heart speaks good words, if they come from his heart. The time was when we loved the father of Hard Heart. He worked for the good of the Indians, and his lodge was always open when they would rest. Why has Hard Heart come to meet Mossfoot?"

"Sit down, chief," commanded the young Tory, pointing to a log. "You understand that the great Canada father is making war with his children in the Mohawk country, because they will not obey him. He wants the help of his red brothers against them."

"It is a white man's fight; why should the Indians take part in it?"

"That the Indians may get back the land these white men have taken."

"Hail the great Canada father will beat his own children to give back the Indian lands! Can Hard Heart throw dust in the eyes of a chief?"

"Of course he will want a little land to build his villages, but the hunting-grounds will be for the Oneida and Mohawk as they were before these wicked white men came."

"Mossfoot has spoken with the chiefs when their ears were open. The Oneidas can gain nothing by fighting the white man's battles, and they will remain quiet in their own country while white men kill each other."

"Beware, Mossfoot!" and Ralph half arose from his seat upon the log. "You must not wake the wrath of the great father, or woe to your nation!"

"Are the Oneidas children?" demanded the chief haughtily,

"No; but Mossfoot has been to Montreal and Quebec, and has seen that the warriors of the great father are many and strong. He has white-winged carriers which will fly across the big sea-water and bring many more. The Oneidas can not stand before them."

"If the Oneidas should make friends with the white men who are here, they will help the Oneidas to beat the great father's men."

"You will drive me too far, chief!" Ralph spoke fiercely. "I tell you that we must beat them in the end, and the Mohawks will make short work of you, if you dare rebel."

"Dare! Hard Heart speaks to an Oneida chief!"

"I wish to show you that your heart has conceived a foolish thought. Thayendanagea is with us. Corn-Planter loves us well, and why should you not?"

"We will stay at home and make corn," quietly replied Mossfoot.

"You must not; you must come out with the rest or I will not answer for the consequences."

"We called a council, and made a great fire," now said Mossfoot, who had kept his temper admirably throughout. "The best wisdom of the Oneida nation was there, and all spoke for peace. It is good; we will stay at home and make corn."

"You are decided on this course?"

"I have spoken."

"And the other chiefs are with you?"

"Every one. They will not fight the red-coats—they will not fight the blue, and if any of the young men will go out we will not protect them from the law of the white man."

"I want to give you one more chance, Oneida," said Ralph. "Once for all, will you join us?"

"I cannot speak with a double tongue," was the reply.
 "No!"

Ralph took his cap by the edge and raised it slowly, running his fingers through the thick curling hair. He had scarcely done so when there came a rustle in the bushes, and Edistah started up with his rifle at his shoulder, pointed at the heart of Mossfoot, who stood gazing into the barrel of the weapon without moving a muscle. The fate of the chief tain seemed to be sealed.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DEAD SHOT.

"You see, Oneida, 'he who is not for us is against us.' Will you tell me why I should not order the Huron to shoot you through the heart? No, no; do not touch a hatchet, or he will fire."

Mossfoot dropped his hand, which had approached the handle of a hatchet, but made no reply.

"Stand firm, Edistah," ordered Ralph. "If he moves, fire, but not yet, if he keeps quiet. I will give you a last chance, chief, because it is important to us that your tribe should take part in the fight at Schuyler. Will you join us?"

"Mossfoot is a man who can look death in the face," was the reply. "Shoot, dog of a Huron—shoot!"

The Huron raised his gun a little, to get a better aim, and his fierce eye flashed along the bright barrel. To him the murder of the chief in cold blood was a *duty*, and he was delighted that his was the hand appointed to lay him low. At this moment the crack of a rifle was heard, but it was not the weapon of Edistah, for the Huron gave a sudden start, dropped his rifle, and clapped his hand upon his bosom, which had been suddenly pierced by the fatal bullet. Then, with a single, bubbling cry of agony, he fell upon his face, stricken down in the moment of his vengeance.

The rifle-shot was a signal. Mossfoot grappled with the

white man before he could draw a weapon, and pinioned his arms to his sides. Then Hans Phiffer, with a smoking rifle in his grasp, rose out of the reeds which lined the banks of the low point, and rushed forward to aid Mossfoot in the capture of the Englishman, who struggled desperately but in vain.

"Oh, you black-hearted dog!" he hissed, as Hans put the finishing-touch upon as artistic a knot as was ever tied. "I will make you sweat blood for this."

"Nefer mind dot now, mine goot frent," said Hans. "You dook care off him, Mossy, vile I looks at dis Hurons."

Hans approached and turned the savage over with his foot, but he was already dead, as the bullet had touched the heart.

"Dot vas all right," he said. "Vant dis scalp, I s'pose, Mossy?"

The Indian nodded, and Hans came forward and stood over the prisoner, while Mossfoot took the scalp of the man so righteously slain. This done, they wrapped some heavy stones in his blanket, tied them about his waist, and flung him into a dark pool.

Then they raised the prisoner and carried him to the canoe, in which they placed him in a sitting posture, and with Mossfoot in the bow and Hans in the stern, the distance across the lake was very soon passed. Swinton, seeing how useless it was for him to be troublesome, had subsided, and watched the movements of his captors with interest.

The canoe shot up to the little dock where the boats of Ichabod were fastened. Hans got out first, and assisted his prisoner, with perhaps a slight excess of force, and held him fast by the collar while Mossfoot secured the canoe.

"You vas coom pack sooner dan you meant, Mynheer Hart Heart; but der beeples vas waiting ver you."

Full of rage, Ralph was assisted, or rather dragged, up the bank, where they were met by Ichabod and Joseph Seaman, equipped for a journey.

"Dere," said Hans; "I prings dot dirty t'ief pack, unt you done vat you likes mit him."

"Mr. Ralph Swinton, or whatever your name may be," said Joseph Seaman, "you are accused of being an Indian agent

of the British Government, sent to instigate the Oneidas to revolt. What do you say to the charge?"

"I say that it is none of your business, and demand my liberty."

"Easy, my friend—easy! It will be a small matter to prove my words good. You have endeavored to work upon the chief, Mossfoot, as Hans Pliffer can testify; you likewise met in the woods with two Hurons, and an officer, who has since been proved to be that infamous Tory, Colonel Butler, with whom you were plotting villainy. Between you and one of the Indians a plan was laid to murder the chief, Mossfoot, if he would not fall into your plans."

"To whom am I indebted for these wholesale accusations?" demanded Swinton.

"Dot vas me!" said Hans. "You ton't gone any veres since you peen come ven I vas away."

"I have a great deal to thank you for," and Ralph grated his teeth sharply together. "Enough of this, Mr. Seanian; what do you propose to do with me?"

"I mean to take you to Fort Schuyler, there to be disposed of according to the will of the commandant, Colonel Gansevoort. Get out the horses, Hans, as we have no time to waste."

"Now Mossy," said Ichabod, "I want you to take keer of my people. Will you do it, while I'm away."

"Mossfoot will not forget. He has a good heart for the old mother and for Bessie, and will watch them. Silver Voice will come and talk with Bessie when Mossfoot is on the hunt."

Hans came out with three horses; and much against his will they lifted the prisoner to his saddle and secured his feet by passing a stout buck-skin thong under the horse from one ankle to the other. This done, they also mounted and a long halter was passed through the bit rings of the prisoner's horse, being secured to the like ring upon the headstalls of the other horses.

"You take great care of me," sneered Ralph. "I hope the time may come soon when I can repay you for all your kindness."

"We don't ask nothin'," said the old hunter. "Confound

the luck, ef a man can't do a little kindness for a friend. Good-by, old lady; good-by, Bessie. Mout be you'd never see me ag'in, but ef ye don't some of the boys will come back to take keer on ye. Hans, I count on ye to help Mossfoot take keer of the fam'ly."

"You petter pelieve I keeps awake!" said Hans. "Goot pye; I hope you whip dem Pritishers like ter duyvel."

The parting between Joseph Seaman and Bessie was peculiar, considering the short time they had known each other. Ralph, who had not by any means given up hope, bit his lips as he saw how the young surgeon retained her hand, and how the rich blood mantled in her cheek. Then they rode away toward Schuyler by paths which both of them knew well, following, as nearly as they could, the course of Wood Creek.

They camped that night at a little opening not far from the Mohawk. Before lying down, they secured their prisoner in such a way that he could not get away, as he obstinately refused to give his parole of honor not to attempt escape. No fire was made, but the moon was shining brightly, and as the young prisoner sat upon the earth with his back against a tree, to which he was bound, his gaze rested savagely upon the upturned faces of the two men who slept at his feet.

"Ten thousand demons haunt them both," he muttered. "To be taken now—now when I have so much to do and to spend no one knows how long in the casemates of a fort. If my hands were free, if but for a moment, they should know that I am not a man who can be insulted with impunity."

But his hands were not free, and as he writhed and twisted about under his bonds he felt a certain respect for the man who could tie a knot in such an artistic manner. He sat there for hours, full of rage, debating with himself what he should do, when something dropped at his feet in the clear moonlight. He did not stoop to pick it up, but recognized the sign which told him that a friend was not far away. Ichabod started up and approached the prisoner, who moved his feet so as to cover the small piece of shell, for it was nothing more, and looked calmly into the face of his captor.

"Can't you let me lie down in some way?" he said. "You hardly treat your prisoners in a gentel manner."

"Then give your parole like a gentleman and keep it," replied Ichabod.

"Not I; something might turn up to help me."

"Thar *might* be an airthquake," suggested Ichabod, "but, I don't think thar will be. That hitch is all right, but by gracious, ef I didn't dream ye'd got loose I don't want a cent. Keep yerself as easy as ye kin and when we git to Schuyler like enuff you'll hev a chance to lay down. Good-nigh again."

He went back to his place, dropped upon the earth, and tried to sleep, but he was uneasy. Again and again he started up and looked at the prisoner only to see him sitting in the same position, with his feet extended upon the sod. Finally he dozed for a while, and then again looking up, he uttered a cry of rage, and rushed to the tree only to find the cords cut in a dozen places and the prisoner gone!

CHAPTER IX.

AFTER ORISKANY.

THE battle of Oriskany was over. All about that gory and trampled field, one of the most bloody for the numbers engaged in the history of border warfare, were the evidences of the brutal rage of man. These borderers had closed, never to part in life in many cases, and lay dead together, knife and saber reddened to the very hilt. Here a member of Johnson's Greens lay dead, with his stiffened hand clutching the dark hair of one of Herkimer's men, in whose dead face might be traced the same blood which had warmed the heart of his Tory antagonist. For, in this bloody struggle the ties of blood and kindred were too often forgotten upon both sides.

The struggle had been terrible. Herkimer, wounded unto death, had strength enough to give his orders. The militia were beating back the rush of Johnson's Greens, Butler's Rangers and the ferocious Mohawks. The Salmon brothers were there, full of energy, and fighting according to the teach-

ings of their father. The old hunter was performing noble work, and his rifle was black with many discharges, while Joseph Seaman acting as an aide to the wounded General, was doing noble service. At that crisis in the battle Colonel Butler, the man who had met Ralph Swinton in company with Edistah, attempted the infamous ruse of sending a body of the "Greens," disguised as Americans, to fall unexpectedly upon the militia. But the quick eye of Ichabod detected, under the blue, the green coats of the Rangers, and half a dozen resolute men saved the army from destruction, by opposing the march of the disguised men, until the others recovered from their stupor and poured in their fire, sending the Greens in confusion from the field.

In the desperate struggle with these men, Ichabod found himself grappled with a man whose face he could not see in the struggle, who had attempted to strike a knife into the heart of Captain Gardenier, who, almost unaided, was fighting against the advance of the Greens. He turned aside the blow and grappled with the man, but was himself beaten back by a desperate blow from the butt of a carabine. As he staggered into the ranks of his friends, stunned and dazed, he caught a glimpse of the face of the officer he had attacked.

"Swinton!" he yelled. "You low-lived dog, I know ye."

"Not yet, Ajax!" shouted Ralph, with a fierce smile. "Forward, men. Will you be beaten by a crew of ragged dogs such as these?"

But the Greens had had enough, and retreated, carrying their leader with them in their retreat, fiercely striking at his own men because they would not advance. Then, through the deep woods arose the mournful cry of defeat from the Indian lips, "Oonah, Oonah!" And the dusky warriors fled, leaving the Provincials masters of the field.

But at what a cost! Herkimer was dying; Cox, Davis, and Van Sluyk were dead, and a host of other heroes had gone the way of all the earth. The sun-rays fell upon the scalped head or the tufted scalp-lock of the Indian. It glistened upon the glittering ornaments and gaudy dress of the British officers who had fallen in the battle, and had not been removed as yet. While far away the mournful wail told where the Indians were yet retreating from the lost battle.

Who won? Our men kept the field, but in their present condition they dared not advance to the relief of Schuyler. They fell back, taking their wounded leader, and mourning over lost friends. The Salmon family had been fortunate, and although Jake had been slightly wounded, it was nothing of consequence.

"It's mighty rough on us, Joe," said Ichabod, as they sat that night over the camp-fire. "We kain't do much to help Gansevoort, now."

"We don't give up so readily, Ichabod," replied Joe. "I only hope that some of these flying parties of Indians won't strike up the shore of the lake as they go."

"I never thought of that," said Ichabod. "They mout do it."

"But I don't think they will. Most of them are Mohawks and won't want to go into the Oneida country, now that they have been beaten."

But Ichabod was ill at ease until one day a young man came into camp who had been through the Oneida country, and also carried news of the safety of the family. No Indians had been seen, and Mossfoot reported that those who kept up their flight after Oriskany, had gone to the east. The faithful Oneida had kept his word, and with Silver Voice literally lived at the Salmon house, while Ichabod was absent. When this had been reported, the old man was more at ease and began to be eager for the coming of Arnold, who had been appointed to take the command made vacant by the death of Herkimer.

"I say, old man," said one of Gardénier's company, "I heard you sing out to that British officer and call him Swinton, when the captain was down with two bayonets in his thighs. What did you call him that for?"

"Ain't it his name?"

"No it ain't. He's of the Butler breed, that chap is, and a meaner breed don't kick. He's a cousin of Walter Butler, the old villain!"

"Oh, if I had only known that afore!" hissed Ichabod. "But, never mind; I'll meet him yet, and when I do I'll make him weep tears of blood. You ain't no idee how I'll inj'y a meal off'n him."

"Oh nonsense; you are not so blood-thirsty as that, old man. What do you hate him for?"

Ichabod explained, and the face of the man fell.

"Tell you what is," he said, "this Butler is an Indian agent among the northern tribes, and they've named him Hard Heart. That's just his nature, too, and if he's promised to be revenged on you he won't rest until he's done it."

Again the old hunter was ill at ease, and he made up his mind to be certain whether the traitor was still in the camp at Schuyler. To a man of his iron nerves, the idea of penetrating the enemy's camp had few terrors. He saw at once that there was danger, and, if he was taken, an ignominious death, but he did not hesitate, and that evening obtained leave of his commander to penetrate the camp and bring back all the information he could.

With this purpose he prepared himself in his own tent, and came out just at dusk, fully prepared for his dangerous enterprise. He felt confident that if Ralph Swinton—Butler—or whatever his name might be, were still in the Indian camp, he would find him with Sir John Johnson.

The night was intensely dark when an odd-looking man reached the river and looked over to the gleaming fires which marked the Johnson camp. His cheek was tied up in a bloody rag, which was passed under his chin over a gray beard, which was also clotted with blood. Then he slipped cautiously into the stream, and swam to the other side, where he was met and challenged by a sentry.

"Dunno nothing 'bout the countersign, stranger. Hope to die if I do," replied the old man.

"Hold up your hands, then; hold them up, curse you, or I'll make daylight shine through you so quick that you won't know what troubled you"

"'Tain't fair!" whined the old man. "Here I've run from the cussid Whigs and nigh about got scalped to git her and tell ye the news, and yit ye want to shoot me. 'Tain't fair, I tell ye."

"What do you want?"

"Want to see the cunnel, or Gin'ral, or somebuddy. You ain't a Gin'ral, be ye?"

"No, I ain't, more's the pity," said the sentry, laughing. "I wish I was. Hold up your hands, I say! I'll get out the corporal. Corporal of the guard—post Number Eight!"

The word was passed down the line, and in a few moments a brutal-looking man, in the uniform of Johnson's Greens, made his appearance.

"Now what do you want, sentry?" he cried, angrily. "What with Whig sorties and cursed foolishness on the part of the men, I have no peace in life. Come, speak out."

"This old man wants to pass, to see the colonel, he says."

"I'll pass him to the guard-house," replied the corporal, in an angry tone. "Come, you old cripple, put your best foot foremost. Touch him up with a bayonet 'f he don't move, Frobisher."

Pushed forward by the bayonet of the colonel's guard, the old man reached the rude log cabin which served as a guard-house, and was pushed into the room, which was lighted by a single lantern swaying from the roof.

"Now give an account of yourself," *my ja*," the corporal said. "Don't hang back."

"I won't tell nobody 'cept the cunnel," replied the old man, in a spirited tone. "You'll be darned sorry & you don't take me to him."

"You're an old fool, and I'm sorry the sentry did not put a ball through you instead of putting me to the *table*."

"Now ain't this mean?" bawled the old man. "Ain't it cussid mean? I run ten miles tew help ye, an' ye talk of shooting. That's what a man gits fur sarvin' the king, ain't it?"

"What have you got to tell?"

"I'll tell the cunnel," roared the old man. "Want to git the *pay*, don't ye, ye cussid thief. I'll tell the cunnel what ye done, blame ye!"

"I suppose we might as well take the old fool up to headquarters," said the corporal, "though the colonel is giving a wine-party. The old knave will make so much noise that he will get us into trouble."

"You treat me fa'r and I'll treat you fa'r," persisted the

prisoner. "I ain't mean, and I'll stand a bottle ef the cunnel does the square thing by me."

As they approached the quarters of Sir John—a large log cabin in the center of the camp—the sound of a roaring chorus and the rattle of glasses told that the Tories were enjoying themselves to the full. The corporal went in, leaving the guard at the door with their prisoner, and reported. Sir John Johnson sat at the head of a rude table, around which were grouped about thirty officers of the Greens and Rangers. The remains of a feast still showed that they had been gormandizing in good old English style, and the array of bottles also showed that they meant to make a night of it. Most of the officers were natives of the Mohawk valley. The elder Butler was seated at the right hand of the baronet, and on his left sat Ralph Swinton, trifling with a glass of wine and drinking but little. Sir John turned his flushed face to the corporal as he made his report, and listened with drunken gravity.

"Insists upon seeing me, does he?" said the baronet. "The persistence of the lower classes is, to say the least, repulsive in the extreme. Repulsive! It is beastly! Have him in, corporal; let us behold this wonderful man, and hear his news."

The corporal went out and returned with the old man, whose eyes wandered up and down the table in a strange, glassy way.

"Now then, my old hero," said Sir John, "what have you got to say?"

"A heap, cunnel. I've jest come up the river, and I'll bet money thar's ten thousand Whigs down thar, a-comin' up as hard as they can pelt."

'Pshaw. Do you expect us to believe any such yarn as that, my good man?"

"You hain't got enny call tew believe it ef ye don't want to," replied the old man, casting a side-glance at Ralph Swinton, who started and looked at him quickly when he first spoke. "I don't force nobody tew believe me."

"Don't be insolent," said Sir John. "My rural friend, do you want me to hang you up by the heels, with your head forty feet from the earth?"

"I hain't done nothing," whined the old man. "Every cussed man I talk to wants to hang, shoot or bile me because I *will* say the Whigs is coming."

"Do you persist in that story?" asked Sir John, whose head began to clear a little as he talked.

"Course I do."

"Who is their leader?"

"Gin'ral Arnold, they do say."

Arnold! A brave soldier, by my life, but a man who would sell his parents to gain honor for himself. Arnold! I don't like that, gentlemen, I assure you. Where did you see this Whig army, my man?"

"I hain't got no call to tell ye," was the sulky reply. "You wouldn't believe me, anyway."

"Out with it, my ragged philosopher," roared Sir John. "Tell us the truth and you shall be rewarded. But lie to us, and I will have you flayed alive."

The old man told a very connected story of a coming Whig force of mighty numbers under the lead of Arnold. He described with great earnestness and force his own escape from an outlying party of scouts, and showed them the bloody handkerchief upon his face as proof of his words.

"I believe that this loyal man has told the truth," said Sir John, looking down the table. "What is your opinion, Colonel Butler?"

"It sounds like the truth, but where the devil did Arnold get so many troops in so short a time? I thought we had wiped them out at Oriskany."

"The less we say about Oriskany the better," said Sir John, who had not been in the battle. "We lost more than we gained there."

"Did you take your nether garments the time Willet attacked you, Sir John?" asked Ralph Swinton, "or did you go without?"

"Sir!" roared Sir John, half-rising from his seat.

"I merely wish to impress upon you, Sir John, that while we did something at Oriskany, the Whigs were busy with your troops. I think I would not place too much credence in this fine old gentleman's report."

"Why not? In my opinion he's an honest old man."

"That's it, cunnel," said the old man. "I'm honest, clear through, I be!"

"He is altogether too innocent," said Ralph. "However, I think we had better not run until we make sure."

"Run, sir, run!"

"Certainly, Sir John," replied Ralph, coolly; "my remark was intended to mean precisely that, and nothing more. I intend to run myself if I see good occasion."

"You are inclined to use strange language this evening sir," said Sir John, loftily. "I would have you know that a British soldier *never* runs."

"Oh, no; he *retreats* in good order, as the Greens did when Colonel Willet made his attack, a few days ago. The boys forgot many necessary articles upon that occasion. Now, then, allow me to ask this old man a few questions."

"If you please," said Sir John, in a sulky tone. "He is at your service."

"When you saw General Arnold and this mythical force of which you speak," said Ralph, "were you near enough to count the regiments?"

"I was nigher than I wanted to be," replied the old man; "I know that much."

"How many colors had they?"

"Anan?" said the old man, with a puzzled look.

"How many colors had they, I say?"

"Mostly *blue*," replied the spy, "but there was some white on the fronts of the coats. Morgan was thar, for I see'd the green coats of his riflemen."

"Pshaw! How many flags did you see?"

"Oh, lordy! You couldn't count 'em in half a day."

"Rather an exaggerated statement, I should think. You did not stay long in the vicinity?"

"I reckon not; I didn't want to git shot if I knowed it."

"That will do. Sir John, I am of the opinion that this old man was so badly frightened that he really did not know whether he saw troops or not. You may give his story all the credence you wish, but, as for me, I believe that it is a mere scare."

At this moment an orderly entered, and passing round the

table, whispered in the ear of Ralph Swinton, who started eagerly and excused himself, leaving the table at once.

"Thar ain't any thing else I kin tell ye, colonel," said the old man.

"No, I think not. Take this"—slipping some money into the extended palm—"and be ready to leave for headquarters early in the morning.

"I've got a friend that used to be in Colonel Butler's regiment," said the old man, "and I'd like to visit him, if the sojers would let me go by."

"What was his name," demanded Butler, looking up quickly.

"Sam Bartram," replied the old man.

"He is in Captain McDonnell's company," said Butler. "I think we may trust the old fellow with the countersign on his own account, Sir John."

Had they not been considerably in liquor this would never have been done, but the countersign was given, and making a rude salute, the old man left the cabin with a queer smile upon his face.

CHAPTER X.

RALPH'S VENGEANCE.

WHEN Ralph Swinton left the table, he was met just outside by Scar Face who greeted him warmly. The Indian had recovered from his wounds and looked hardy enough for any struggle, no matter how fierce it might be.

"Ha, brother," he said, "it is long since Scar Face has seen you, and his heart is glad."

"Have you done what I sent you to do?" demanded Ralph.

"It is done," replied the Indian. "Forty warriors await the Hard Heart in the deep forest to the north of the great lake of the Oneidas."

"It is well done. In my opinion, it will not be many days when we leave this fort and join Burgoyne. When the

retreat is commenced, meet me upon the low hill to the east of Wood Creek, where the trader was killed, three snows since. Do you remember the place?"

The Indian tapped the handle of his hatchet significantly, for that weapon had laid the trader low. They engaged for half an hour in a low conversation, when Ralph detected a dark figure skulking in the shadow of a cabin. Making a sudden spring, he seized the skulker, and turning his face to the light, saw the old man who had brought the news of the coming of Anrold.

"Now you cursed spy, what are you doing here?" hissed Ralph.

"Nothin', Gin'ral, nothin', 'pon my word. I kinder got lost among the huts, and don't know which way to go."

"Do you mean to tell me that you have not listened to my conversation with the chief?" was the fierce demand.

"Lord sake, Gin'ral; course I heerd ye, but ye don't s'pose I understand *Injun*, do ye? 'Tain't no ways likely."

"I suspect you, grievously," said Ralph; "but as long as the colonel and baronet who commands this regiment sees fit to pass you, I have nothing to say. But don't spy on me—that is all."

The old man shuffled away, evidently glad to escape from the clutches of the young Tory. He did not take the direction of the camp of the Rangers, but marched directly for the river, passing the sentries by means of the countersign so kindly furnished by Sir John Johnson. After passing the last guard, he plunged into the river and swam to the other side, where, throwing off the bloody rag and false beard, and washing the stains from his face, he appeared in the person of Ichabod Salmon.

"Them chaps over thar is cussed green," he muttered "Give a stranger the countersign and let him git out of camp when he likes. I'd like to see old Put doing that, I would. I wonder what them *Injuns* are waiting north of the lake for? Some deviltry, I'll go bail."

He started on a slow trot in the direction of the American camp, communing with himself as he went, and reached the camp just at daybreak. It is hard to define the feelings of Sir John Johnson next day, when, search being made for the

old man, he was nowhere to be found. Inquiry of the sentries revealed the fact that he had passed out of the camp, half an hour after he left the tent.

In the midst of their doubt as to his real character, Hon Yost Schuyler, a spy who had been released by Arnold upon condition that he should frighten the English away from Fort Schuyler, made his appearance with his astounding intelligence. The result of that stratagem is known, and first the Indians and then the red coats and Tories, commenced a hasty retreat, and Arnold arrived upon the ground only in time to spoil their abandoned camp. Immediately after the *entree*, Ichabod obtained leave of absence for himself and three of his sons, and with Joseph Seaman started for home. He felt, why, he did not know, a dim foreboding that all was not well, and that his presence was necessary for the safety of his family. What was his delight, then, upon riding into the open space in front of the house, to see Hans and the Oneida contentedly smoking their pipes in front of the house, and Silver Voice, with Bessie, floating idly down the lake in a canoe.

"Hooray!" cried Ichabod. "All safe, eh; how's all the folks, Hans?"

"Peautiful," replied Hans. "So goot vat nefer vas. I don't see an Injun or a Dory since you gone away."

Mossfoot arose and saluted the old man and Seaman, gravely, and while Ichabod went into the house to see his wife, Seaman stood looking after the canoe and hoping that the girls would soon make up their minds to return. As he gazed, he saw them land upon the point where the duel between the two chiefs had taken place, draw their canoe up on the gravel and go up the bank together. Hardly had they done so, when both girls again appeared running at their utmost speed and essayed to launch their canoe again in the greatest haste. Before they could succeed in doing so, an Indian and white man sprung down the bank and siezed them, and bare them struggling into the woods. Seaman uttered a cry of agony, and Mossfoot, with a savage yell, sprung up and grasped his weapons. Hans ran into the house for his rifle and called to Ichabod, who came out in haste, when they saw a number of Indians leap the fences in the rear of the house and come up on a run.

"Git out your mother, Hank!" cried Ichabod. "Them's Hurons; to the boats!"

The Indians were nearly an eighth of a mile away, and the settlers were accustomed to act promptly, when it was necessary to do so. While some pushed out the large bateau and others staved the canoes, the most valuable articles in the house were quickly carried out, and before the savages could reach them the entire party, with their arms and ammunition, were upon the lake and out of the reach of such weapons as the Indians possessed. Ichabod shook his clenched hand at the Hurons and roared back at them a wild defiance.

Hans took the tiller, for he understood the management of the boat better than any one else, and headed her directly before the wind instead of for the point where the girls had been taken.

"Where are you going?" cried Seaman, laying his hand upon the tiller. "We must follow the villains who have abducted Bessie."

Hans looked at his master, questioningly, but resisted the efforts of the surgeon to take the tiller from his hand.

"Ve vas fools off we gone near dot blace now," he said. "Dem vellers wait on der pank, unt how many would get ashore; dot vas vot I wants to know."

"Hans is right," confessed Ichabod. "It's hard—it's mighty hard, but we kain't help it. I reckon we'd better stand up the lake until we kin land the Oneida and send him arter some men. We'll take the old lady with us and the Oneidas will take keer of her while I'm gone."

"Every Oneida will be glad to give aid to the good white woman," said Mossfoot, from whose face the fierce glare had not passed away. "I must follow Scar Face, the Huron dog who has stolen my wife."

"You'll want some men, anyhow," replied Ichabod. "Thar's forty of the cusses according to the number I heerd Scar Face give in the English camp that night, and we could do nothing with so many."

"Mossfoot will wait," was the reply. "He seeks for vengeance upon the Huron, and when that vengeance fails it will be terrible."

"I don't seem to think that Ralph Swinton will stand much

chance when he faces this yer rifle," said Ichabod. "He's got my gal and I'm going to hev her back or know the reason why."

Mrs Salmon was weeping bitterly, and as Hans pushed the tiller over, all turned their gaze toward the house, and the swarming group of Indians. In an incredibly short space of time they removed every thing which seemed to attract their cupidity, and piling a quantity of combustible matter in the middle of the floor, set fire to it, and the humble dwelling was quickly in a blaze.

"Now look at that!" cried Ichabod, through his set teeth. "Ain't that pizen to look at? D'ye blame me ef I hunger and thirst arter Injun flesh for tea?"

"Don't talk in that way, husband," said Mrs. Salmon. "Think of our poor Bessie in the power of these cruel men."

"They won't be in the hands of them men long unless I go under," replied Salmon, hissing the words out in a furious passion. "Let her go through the water, Hans; I'm just crazy till we git on the trail. I git so mad sometimes I don't know what to do with myself when I think sech cusses cumber the face of the green airth."

For an hour after very little was said, and Hans managed the boat neatly, landing them upon a point about eight miles above the burning home of the Salmons. The Indians upon the north shore set up a howl of rage as they saw that the fugitives did not mean to land, and would have followed them, but Ralph Swinton, who was in command, would not allow them to do so.

"We must be satisfied with what we have got, Scar Face," he said, addressing the Huron chief. "You have succeeded in your efforts for the recovery of Silver Voice, and I have Bessie Salmon in my power. Signal your men to meet us at the foot of the lake."

The Indians upon the other shore were telegraphed in a peculiar Indian fashion, which they understood and answered and the party began to move. Ralph Swinton took charge of Bessie and led her to the green point from which she could see her burning home, and the white sail of the "Bessie," the name of the bateau, standing to the north-west.

"There go your friends," he said. "They care but little

for you, or they would have landed and attempted your rescue. But what can you expect from such cowards!"

"Cowards, Mr. Swinton! What do you call a coward, if not the man who makes war upon helpless women?"

"I do not make war upon you, Bessie," he said; "on the contrary I love you to distraction, and will not let you waste the treasures of your youth and beauty upon a set of clod-hoppers. But, let me warn you, that while I love you, I am not the man to suffer an insult, even from you."

"That is right; show your bravery by threatening a prisoner and a woman. It suits your other conduct well."

"I can not waste words with you now," growled Ralph. "Now then, Scar Face, is the canoe ready?"

They had taken the canoe in which the girls had crossed, and two stalwart Hurons were already seated in it with their paddles ready. Bessie saw that it was useless to resist, for they were quite ready to use force if necessary, and she took her place in the middle of the canoe. Silver Voice followed, turning a wild look upon the immovable face of the Huron chief, as he also stepped in, followed by Ralph Swinton. Then, giving the word, the canoe shot rapidly through the water in the direction of the eastern end of the lake. They kept quite close to the shore, fearing that those in the boat, seeing them embark, might be willing to try conclusions with them upon the water.

The canoe at length made a landing upon the furthest point which could be reached by water. Here they were joined by both parties of Indians, about forty in all, rough, painted warriors—laden with the spoils of the Salmon house. Immediately upon landing, the march was commenced, Scar Face holding in one hand the end of a stout rawhide rope which was passed about the slender waist of Silver Voice. He knew well that if she once escaped and made her way into the woods it would not be easy for him to recover her, for few among the Indians were so swift of foot.

They camped that night in a sheltered glen among the hills, selected by the Indians for its utter seclusion, and a guard was placed over the two girls, with orders to watch them sleeplessly, upon peril of their lives.

Ralph Swinton had risked too much to obtain possession of

Bessie Salmon to lose her easily now and the prisoners lay down under the great trees, watched by their tireless guards, waiting for any chance of escape which might appear.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DEADLY TRAILER.

THE night passed but slowly, the hours dragging heavily to the two girls. Whenever they looked up, it was only to meet the steady glare of the sleepless eyes of those Indian guards, who knew their leaders too well to risk any thing for the sake of sleep. Both had lighted their pipes and were smoking tranquilly, when the sound of a heavy fall and a loud death-cry aroused the camp from its slumbers. All was now still, for after the first cry not a sound was heard, and they waited anxiously for a repetition of the cry.

"Who is missing?" demanded Ralph Swinton, looking over the ranks of the Indians. "Ha, where is Isiagaska?"

"He was there by the tree," said Scar Face, pointing to a large oak a few paces distant.

Half a dozen men started for the tree, and there, in the clear moonlight, they found the gory body of the Indian they sought, his skull crushed by a heavy blow, but his scalp had not been touched.

"No Indian did this," said Scar Face. "The scalp is here."

It was proof incontestable. Any Indian, no matter what the danger might be, would have waited to tear off the token of victory.

The struggle had been a brief one, and Ralph kept the Indians back while he, in company with Scar Face, looked for the trail. They found it at last, and Ralph gave a cry of rage, for he recognized the marks of the ponderous feet of Hans Phiffer! After the experience he had of the young Dutchman, it was any thing but pleasant to know that *he* was on the trail.

"Break up the camp!" commanded Swinton, hoarsely. "We must march all night until we reach a place where we can stand a siege. I don't believe they will let us get to the Horicon without a fight."

"Does my brother know him?" asked Scar Face, pointing to the trail.

"Yes; it is the man who killed Edistah and took me prisoner."

"Hugh! He is a good scout. Shall not the braves scatter out and search the woods?"

"It is useless," replied Ralph. "He has hiding-places without number, and we should only waste our time in trying to find him."

"The Hurons do not wish to run from one man."

"I want the camp broken up at once, Scar Face," ordered Ralph, fiercely. "Do you want to lose Silver Voice, after all the trouble you have had?"

"No!" was the terse reply. "When Scar Face can not keep her he will kill her."

At this moment a shot from an unseen source whistled unpleasantly close to the head of the speaker, and found a lodgment in the heart of an Indian who stood upon a log behind him. The Indians, with the true caution of their race, at once sank out of sight behind every convenient shelter, and Ralph was not slow in following the example. The hidden man who had fired the fatal shot did not show himself, and at a signal-whistle, a dozen scouts entered the woods at various points and surrounded the spot from which the shot had seemed to come. But, upon careful search, not a trace of the hidden enemy could be discovered. Yet, hardly had the Indians left the woods, satisfied that the man they sought had fled, when a rifle cracked a second time, while the savages were grouped in consultation—this shot killing one and wounding two others.

"We are wasting lives here in vain," cried Ralph. "I tell you to order the men to march at once, Scar Face."

The chief obeyed this time, for the mysterious movements of the destroyer filled him with dread. The Indians filed slowly away through the silent wood, moving with the caution of their race, but in the first dark cover through which

they passed, another man bit the dust. It was remarked that no shot was fired at Ralph, and doubtless the fact that he kept close to Bessie, alone saved him from being singled out by the unseen marksman. Again and again did the Indians dash into the woods, satisfied that at length they had the enemy at a stand, but as often they returned, baffled and confused, only to hear the crack of the deadly rifle when they again commenced the march.

It was plain to all that the man who thus assailed them was perfectly acquainted with the country and able to make use of this intimate knowledge in eluding all pursuit. The Indians were mad with the desire for vengeance, as in a march of three miles, as many of their number had fallen. They moved more swiftly and took devious paths, but wherever they went this tireless tracker was ever close behind them, and the crack of his rifle kept time to their march.

"Destruction light upon his head, whoever he may be," hissed Ralph, as the fourth man fell under a shot from the cover in front. "Here, Scar Face, order the men to scatter and make for the camp we have chosen, with the exception of five picked men."

The order was quickly obeyed, and the little group of Indians, under their white leader, stood near the body of the last man who had fallen.

"Place the women in the center," ordered Ralph, in a loud voice, "and continue the march. This hidden assassin can not fire without risk to them."

Whether the assailant heard this and feared to do injury to the women, or had tired of the pursuit, it is impossible to say, but from the moment the little company assumed this compact form, with the women in the center, not a shot was fired, and they pursued their way unmolested through the moonlit woods. In this way they proceeded for some hours, and at last approached the place they had chosen for a camp. Mounting the crest of a hill, they descended a deep, sheltered ravine and pursued their way over a rugged path under the shelter of gigantic rocks, and entered a glen through which flowed a dark and rapid stream—that which is known as Canada Creek, and there they halted and went into camp.

The women, literally worn out by their toilsome march,

dropped almost lifeless upon the hard rocks and slept like the dead. When morning broke Ralph aroused the men for the work of a temporary stay. The spot had been previously selected and now was to be used for a few days' halt and for defense if necessary. The location was upon the side of a rocky hill, surrounded upon all sides by pine forests, with a deep ravine with almost perpendicular sides in the rear and upon two sides, and only one means of approach, over a rough road.

The Indians, under Swinton's directions, began to fortify the forest by piling up the scattered bowlders and in a short time they had erected a formidable barricade, at least eight feet high, the outer face quite smooth, and the inner rough enough to afford footing for the men while delivering their fire. Ralph regarded his work with a look of satisfaction when the Indians had finished.

"Very well done, indeed, Scar Face," he said. "You Indians have some idea of war, after all. It will take more than twice our number to dislodge us, and the only weak point I can see, is that they might drive us out by placing riflemen among the trees on the other side of the ravine. However, the wolf is at bay. Here I stay until Burgoyne has cleared a path down the Mohawk or I am satisfied that the rebel whelps will triumph."

An irregular cleft in the rocks—it could hardly be called a cave—was made the prison of Bessie and Silver Voice. A heavy stone was rolled over this cleft and as it did not fit closely the girls were more happy than when in the presence of their brutal captors.

In the midst of their proceedings, the crack of a rifle was heard in the woods at some distance from the camp. It was followed by ominous silence, and then the forest resounded with savage yells of triumph.

"My warriors have taken a prisoner or a scalp," cried the chief. "Let us go and meet them."

He darted away at a rapid pace, closely followed by the young Tory. Half a mile from the camp they met three stout warriors dragging forward a stout figure in whom, with a thrill of joy, Ralph recognized one he hated above all others in the Mohawk valley, Hans Puiffer! The young scout had

been wounded by a blow from a hatchet, and the blood was trickling down his face, but he met the malevolent glance of Ralph Swinton by a look of sturdy defiance.

"My dear young friend," said the Tory in a smooth, even tone, "I am delighted beyond measure to meet you, the last man upon earth whom I expected to see."

"I ton't care apout it," replied Hans. "It dook a goot many off dese vellers to catch me."

"You are caught and that is enough. You may perhaps remember what I told you, when we met last, and you dared to strike me down like a dog."

"Vell, vat you going to do apout it, Mynheer Shwinton? I ton't seem to care very mooch, mineself," replied Hans coolly.

"Away with him to the camp," cried Ralph. "Let us see what he says under the fiery trial. Away!"

CHAPTER XII.

THE DREADFUL TEST.

THEY urged the brave boy forward with word and blow, pricking him with their knives, and exposing him to every indignity, yet he was calm and collected and did not seem to feel the blows leveled at him. His blue eyes roved from place to place, and even in that moment of danger he did not forget that he was a scout. He noted the approaches to the camp with a watchful eye, to assure himself that he could escape if once out of the hands of his captors, and there was something in his bold bearing which won the respect of his enemies.

As they came into camp the Hurons crowded about them, and loud shouts of delight went up as they saw a white prisoner, and one taken by their own men, whom they could use as they would.

He was tightly bound to a stunted tree, his bare head exposed to the now scorching rays of the sun and the Indians

gathered in groups discussing the event. While they did so Ralph approached the young man as he stood bound to the tree.

"Now, my boy," he said. "You see the fate in store for you. These men are wild for a victim, and your tortures will be fearful."

"I knows all about dot," said Hans quietly. "Vy ton't you gone away?"

"I want to save you," replied Ralph. "Badly as you have treated me I still feel sorry to see a white man perish by torture. Now tell me all about old Salmon's force, and all shall be well."

"How do I know dot you would not let me tie off I vas to dell you?"

"My word of honor," said Ralph, eagerly. "Surely that ought to suffice for you under the circumstances."

"It von't do," said Hans. "You vas a liar anyway, unt I ton't care who knows it. Go away mit you, unt leaf me alone mit mineself. A man can die only vonce, unt off my dime is come I vas satisfied to go."

"You are a fool," hissed the Tory. "Do you know that these are Hurons and that they do not yet know that your hand and no other killed the chief Edistah by the lake? If they knew that they would tear you limb from limb."

"Vell; I caunt help it."

"You can if you will give me the information I ask. I merely want to know who Salmon has with him, and what he designs to do."

"I vill see you mit ter Dyfel pefore I dells you!" almost shouted the young Dutchman.

"Die in your folly, idiot, that you are!" cried Ralph. "You have not an hour to live. Is there any thing I can do for you?"

"Yaw."

"What is it?"

"Dake a bistol unt shoot me, unt den I ton't care how mooch I vas purnt."

"It would be as much as my life was worth to do that now," was the answer. "Would you like to see your young mistress before you die?"

The eyes of the brave boy lighted up at the question, and he did not need to speak. Ralph ran to the cave-prison and pushing away the stone asked Bessie to come out. Through the chinks in the stone, she had seen the peril of her young friend, and her heart was in agony for his sake. The moment she emerged from the cave, she ran to the side of the prisoner, but Swinton held her back.

"A moment, if you please. Do you give your word that you will not try to release him if I let you talk to him?"

"Yes, yes; let me go."

He released her, and she stood before Hans with a sorrowful look on her beautiful face.

"My poor boy," she said. "This is dreadful. How did you happen to be taken prisoner?"

"Vell, I vas scouting," replied Hans, "unt a pig red chap shumped on my pack over a log. I shoots him tead, unt before I could run away, dey vas all on me togedder."

"Was it you who followed us yesterday, and killed so many of the Hurons?"

"Hush up dot!" whispered Hans. "Dey vas mat enough mit me now, but they would be matter off dey knew dot. Yah; dot vas me."

"You brave good boy! Can I do nothing to set you free? What do I care for a promise given to such a man as Ralph Swinton?"

"You let me alone!" replied Hans. "Off I gone away now *you* vood haf to dake my blace. Look you; I vas a Toooh-mans, unt ven I comes to your fadder, I vas so boor dot I vas hungry unt half naked. He gifs me food, he gifs me clothes, unt now I am not afraid to die for his dochter. I am glad off der chance."

"You must not die, Hans! I will appeal to Ralph Swinton; I will go down on my knees to him and ask for your life. He can not refuse it."

"Shild," said Hans, solemnly, "ton't you drust dot man. He can not save me off he vould, for der Hurons vas *mat*. Goot-pye, little fraulein; ton't forget poor Hans ven he is gone."

Bessie ran sobbing to Ralph Swinton and flung herself at his feet.

"Do not let him die, sir, if you have any manhood in your breast. He is a white man and a brave one, if he is your enemy, and I pray for his life."

"He is in the hands of the Indians," replied Ralph. "I can do nothing for him now."

"You pretended to be all-powerful among the Indians," she expostulated.

"There is a limit to every thing," he answered, "and for my life I dare not interfere with him now. Go back to your prison, for a fearful tragedy is about to begin."

"You will not save him?"

"I can not."

"You are a villain," she cried, angrily. "Do you hear me? You are a coward and a villain."

"I hear you," replied the young Tory. "Go back as I tell you, unless you would look on the most horrible sight thought can conceive, the destruction of a human being by fire."

But she would not go back, but stepped aside and stood near Silver Voice, who also came out of the prison and was standing near at hand, with her dark eyes sparkling with subdued fire. The Indians had piled the fagots high about the unfortunate boy, and now the dark circle closed in, while a young warrior advanced with a blazing torch.

"Have mercy on yourself, Bessie," whispered Swinton. "Do not look upon his death, for it will be terrible."

She shook her head, and he drew back despairingly as the Indians began to circle about the stake, chanting a wild song. The young man with the torch ran forward to fire the pile, when they saw him stagger and fall, the blood bubbling from a ghastly wound in his breast, while the rifle-crack announced the manner of his death, and a thin smoke floated up from the bushes on the other side of the creek, at this point about a hundred feet wide.

Another warrior caught up the torch, and ran forward, but he, too, fell dead in his tracks.

"Into the cave, you two!" hissed Swinton. "Fools! Let the Hurons notice you they will kill you where you stand."

Silver Voice caught Bessie by the hand and drew her back to the cave, where they could watch the singular scene unobserved. Not an Indian was now in sight, and Hans stood

surrounded by the fagots, alone in the midst of the opening. No, not alone, for two dead men lay bleeding on the stones, one grasping in his dead hand the blazing torch, which had not yet touched the funeral pile of Hans Phiffer.

Who would fire the pile? They knew well that at least two men lay hidden on the other side of the stream, safe from any thing which they could do, for it was impossible to cross unobserved. Those two men in their present position could kill them, man by man, before they could manage to reach them, and Hans Phiffer was safe from the fiery death unless a man could be found hardy enough to attempt to reach the torch and fire the pile.

The men on the other side of the ravine, whoever they were, kept silent and made no sign, while their enemies were also quiescent. But, they had no shots to throw away, for they were there to defend Hans Phiffer from death.

"You must do something," said Ralph, creeping to the side of Scar Face, as he lay in the shadow of the rocks. "There are only two of them, and it is a shame for us to be baffled by them."

"The river is too wide and deep," replied Scar Face. "We cannot reach them."

"Will no one dare to fire the pile and end this Dutch scoundrel?"

"Will you go?" demanded Scar Face, with a sneer.

"I will fire the pile without going near it," replied Ralph. "See how I do it."

He gathered a tuft of dry grass, and wrapped it about a stone weighing about a pound, until he had made a ball nearly a foot in diameter. This he saturated with the oil in the little flask which he used in cleaning his rifle. About the stone he tied a stout buck-skin thong, one end of which he held in his hand as he lighted the lower part of the ball. Advancing to the edge of the rocks, within twenty feet of the fatal tree, he threw the burning ball into the midst of the heap of combustibles about the form of Hans Phiffer. In an instant the flame began to catch the lower part of the heap and curl slowly upward. A thick smoke arose, in the midst of which the figure of Hans Phiffer could be faintly discerned, struggling to get free. The fatal ingenuity of Ralph Swinton

had accomplished the work, and Hans Phiffer, the gallant scout, the faithful friend, was in the midst of the flames which eddied about the tree of death so fiercely that it was impossible to see him. A double cry of dismay broke from his friends on the other side of the ravine, and the triumphant shouts of the Hurons pealed out as they noted the effect of the fireball.

"Hard Heart is wise," said Scar Face, as the Tory came back, flushed with triumph. "Now let us go to the cave and see if the women are safe."

Crawling between the rocks and sheltering their bodies as well as they could from the view of their enemies upon the opposite bank, they reached the cave and peered in. To their utter dismay they found that the women were gone.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN UNEXPECTED FINALE.

WHERE had they fled?

In the confusion attendant on the sudden attack of their friends in aid of poor Hans Phiffer, the quick-witted Indian woman had glided out of the cave, and, shielded by the smoke which rolled between her and the outlying Indians, had made a reconnoissance, and then called out Bessie, who followed her without a word. So quickly was it done, that while the flames were spreading about the tree, they were gliding down toward the entrance to the ravine, thinking of nothing except to put as much distance as possible between them and their deadly enemies. But, they had not gone far when the rush of coming feet, and loud calls upon every side except the front, convinced them that their enemies were already in pursuit.

"I will die before I will suffer that scoundrel to take me again," said Bessie. "For my honor's sake kill me rather than that, for I am not brave enough to do it myself."

"Let Bessie be of good heart," answered Silver Voice "follow me."

She left the plateau along the bank of the stream, and rapidly descended the bank through a sort of cleft which ran down to the water's edge. There was need of haste, for they could hear the pursuers close upon them, and recognized the voices of Ralph and Scar Face, eager and loud in the pursuit.

Only three of the Hurons were with the two leaders, and the rest were scattered through the woods. At the point where the girls stood trembling under the bank, the stream was divided by a stony island, perhaps fifty feet long by twenty wide.

"Can Bessie swim?" demanded the Indian wife, turning to the white maiden.

Bessie gave an eager assent.

"Then we must swim across the stream," said Silver Voice. "We have friends on the other side."

The stream was very rapid at this point, but Bessie preferred death in the flood to falling again into the hands of Ralph Swinton. Running up the stream a little further they were seen by their enemies, who shouted in delight, and began to descend the almost perpendicular walls of the cañon. But the brave girls dashed headlong into the water, and struggling with the fierce current gained the rocky island in the center.

"I am proud of the girl I am to marry, by Jove!" ejaculated Ralph. "Where they go, we can surely follow."

Throwing off their outer garments, and retaining only knives and hatchets in their belts, four of the party dashed into the stream, and in a moment more had gained a footing on the rocks, in spite of the efforts of the girls to keep them back.

"It is no use, my darlings," said Ralph as he laid his hand upon the arm of Bessie while Scar Face seized Silver Voice, who left the marks of her ten digits on his face; "we are the conquering heroes and *must* win, you know. Ha! Listen to that, Scar Face; by all the devils in the pit, they are driving our men!"

A combat had suddenly commenced under the arches of the grand old woods about the river. A combat of the past,

when Indians on foot, of the great Iroquois nation, attacked their ancient enemies the Hurons of the Lakes. The rattle of firearms, the clash of knives, yells of savage vengeance, the dying groan and the scalp-cry, disturbed the solemn stillness. At the same moment two rifles cracked and two Hurons went to their account, while, dashing down the eastern bank, came Mossfoot, Ichabod Salmon and Joseph Seaman, eager for the fray.

Without a moment's hesitation they plunged into the stream, and Ralph Swinton saw that no time was to be lost. Clasp^{ing} Bessie suddenly in his arms he threw her into the water in its swiftest part and followed resolutely. This man preferred to see her die sooner than permit Joseph Seaman to rescue her from his hands.

"Look!" cried Scar Face, shaking his glittering hatchet before the eyes of Silver Voice. "Mossfoot, would you see her die, or will you fight for her again?"

"Wait," cried Mossfoot. "An Oneida is ready."

Ichabod and Seaman had suffered themselves to pass the head of the island as they saw the desperate act of Ralph Swinton, and already they were sweeping down the current in hot pursuit. Bessie instinctively made use of her knowledge of swimming, and, unable to turn back in the rapid current, she kept afloat until an eddy brought her near the bank. Before she could get breath to fly, Ralph again had her in his grasp.

"Ours is a stormy courtship," he said; "but I shall win at last. How the knaves fight, above there! I wish I only knew where my men are, for I might run into a wasp's nest. Come on!"

He seized her by the wrist with an iron hand and dragged her up the bank on the right, just as Ichabod and Joseph rounded the bend which formed the eddy. She would have screamed, but he covered her mouth with his hand, and the two men swept on down the stream.

"So far, good!" he cried. "By the time they get to the next bend, and satisfy themselves that we are not in the river, they must walk half a mile over a rough road, if indeed they get out of the ravine at all. By that time, after these knaves drive my rascals a little further, I shall be able to put some

distance between us. Look there ; as I live, my friend Scar Face and Mossfoot are at it on the island."

From the place where they stood they could see the island, and that Mossfoot and Scar Face, for the second time in their history, stood face to face, while, as before, Silver Voice, the prize of the combat, looked on in silence.

But this time the duel could only end in the death of one or the other ; there was no mercy now.

Yes, they stood face to face, for the Huron, still confident in his prowess, had permitted his enemy to land upon the island, and stood with knife poised and hatchet lifted, waiting for the attack. Perhaps he might not have suffered his adversary to land but that Silver Voice had caught up a knife and hatchet from the grasp of one of the slain men, and stood at bay.

Mossfoot did not hesitate, for his blood was stirred to fury by the abduction of his wife, and nothing could stand before him in his wrath. The hatchets clashed against each other, the knives struck fire, and before a looker-on could have counted three, the long knife of the Oneida chief was buried to the hilt in the bosom of Scar Face.

The chief dropped his weapons, caught the handle of the knife in his right hand, and stood looking into the face of his enemy with a fixed, glassy stare, slightly reeling as he stood. There was something grand in the expression of his dark face—a look of noble daring, of lofty pride, even in the face of death.

"Keep back, Mossfoot!" he cried, in a hollow voice. "I will die as I have lived—a chief and a warrior! My scalp you can not have, for I give it to the waves."

He spoke, and drawing out the knife suddenly and casting it upon the ground, while the hot blood spurted from the wound, he plunged into the stream and was borne away by the tide. Signing to Silver Voice to remain, the chief darted after, for he could not lose the coveted scalp of so great a brave as Scar Face. The body, borne by the stream, and Mossfoot in pursuit, rounded the point in the river and were gone. Ralph Swinton, with a grim smile, beheld the tragic fate of his companion in crime.

"The Huron is on his last trail," he said; "and now to see to my own safety."

The battle was still going on in the forest about them, but it was rolling rapidly up the slope, as if the rescue party were driving the Hurons before them, as indeed they were. The attack had been so sudden and unexpected that they were taken completely by surprise, and without a recognized leader, since Scar Face and Ralph were both absent, it did not take long for the Oneidas, led by the sons of Ichabod Salmon, to put them to flight.

Swinton forced a gag into the mouth of his prisoner, and then taking her hand, led her rapidly southward, being satisfied that the rescue party would never think of looking for them in the rear of the forces. For an hour he kept up his rapid march along the stream, until it became so shallow that he could ford it easily. This he did at once, and striking into a wood-path well known to him, he took the old war-trail to the north, satisfied that those of the Hurons who escaped from the battle would find him on the trail, and help him on the way.

"If there is any one thing of which I am glad, it is that your Dutch friend, Hans, is not on my trail," he said. "That boy has given me more trouble than any enemy I ever met, and it is well that he is 'expended.'"

As he spoke he removed the gag, as he felt quite safe now.

They kept on their weary march for another hour, when Bessie showed signs of exhaustion. He saw this, and as he had heard nothing to indicate that they were pursued, he made a halt and allowed her to rest half an hour, and then went on more leisurely. About three in the afternoon he again halted.

"As I hear nothing of our good friends the Oneidas and their allies, I do not think it safe to go on at present. We will camp here until morning," he announced.

"Mr. Swinton," she said, "I do not suppose that it is of any use to appeal to you to set me free. What object have you in forcing me unwillingly to follow you to the north? How can you expect a happy life, even if you succeed in making me your wife?"

"I will take the chances of happiness," he answered. "I

am tired of the war-trail, and from this time I shall take my place as a major in the British army. It is a proud position, and you will soon forget your wild border life."

"I can not forget," she replied, "and I swear under the blue vault of heaven that if you force me to it I will kill you with any weapon I can find. I will strike you sleeping; I will follow you with deadly hate until you are in the grave. Take warning while there is time."

He uttered a strange, hollow laugh as he replied:

"If I knew that you would kill me an hour after, I would marry you as soon as we reached St. John's. Your own honor demands this at my hands, even your friends would say. But as I have a little scouting to do, and very little time to do it in, I must take the liberty of binding you."

He tied her fast, hand and foot, and seated her in the cavity of a large hollow basswood, and blocked up the opening with pieces of rotten wood in the most natural manner possible. Having done this, he headed for the river.

After a hard hour's march he reached the stream, and crawling close to the bank looked over the rim of the chasm. He saw a camp of Oneidas on the bluff, where ten or twelve men were moving about, most of them engaged in stretching scalps which they had taken. Silver Voice stood leaning against the rocks near the brink of the ravine, looking eagerly down the river, but neither the Salmon boys, Ichabod, Mossfoot nor Seaman were anywhere in sight.

"Good faith," muttered Ralph, "I don't believe many of the scoundrelly Hurons got away from the Oneidas. Small loss that, if the rest of these fellows do not take my trail. But, where are they?"

Creeping a little closer to the bank, he followed the direction of the eyes of Silver Voice, and saw that she was watching a number of men who were wading about in the stream below, searching among the rocks. He saw among them the men he missed, and comprehended at a glance what they were doing.

"The fools think we are drowned," he muttered, slapping his thigh. "Ha! ha! ha! I hope that they will find the bodies! Splendid, upon my word. I will hurry back and start at once upon the trail."

He arose and stole away toward the place where he had left Bessie, chuckling as he went at the thought that his pursuers were so completely at fault. There was nothing now to stop him, and he could make his way at once to the north after he had found some of the retreating Hurons.

He approached the tree, looking carefully about to see that no one was on his trail, and then began to remove the pieces of wood one by one.

"Now, my pet, the coast is clear; so for Canada and a wedding!" he said, as he worked.

A muffled sound, almost as much like a smothered laugh as any thing else, came from within the hollow tree, as the logs were suddenly thrown aside, and in another moment the Tory was clasped in a pair of muscular arms, while a deep voice, which he knew too well, shouted:

"Coom to mine arms, mine coot frent!"

It was Hans Phiffer—the irrepressible and indestructible Hans—risen like a Phoenix from the flames, to the utter dismay and rage of Ralph Swinton! The two rolled on the earth in a desperate struggle, and in his wild rage Ralph was almost a match for Hans. But, at the moment when it seemed that the Englishman must conquer, a cord with a running noose in it was passed suddenly over his head, and he was dragged backward upon the ground, while above him stood the form of Bessie, a cocked pistol in her hand.

"You are my prisoner," she cried. "Surrender, in the name of the law."

"Vel," said Hans, sitting up on the sod, "how vash you, anyvay? You t'ought I vas purnt oop, eh?"

"I saw you in the flames with my own eyes."

"I vas vire-proof," exclaimed Hans. "I vas a Salamander, dot is vat I vas."

He arose and bound the arms of his prisoner, who begged his captor to shoot him through the head, which little kindness he refused, on the ground that Ralph would not do as much for him when asked to do so. Driving his prisoner before him at the point of his own knife, Hans turned toward the river, followed by Bessie, and came suddenly upon the bank above the rifts, where the men were still searching for the body of Bessie.

"Hullo, you veilers down dere!" he shouted. "Vat vas you fishing for?"

They looked up, and seeing the three figures framed against the summer sky, a cheer arose from every throat, at which the old woods rung again, and Hans was the hero of the hour. Ten minutes later Bessie was in her father's arms, from which she was released only to drop into the strong clasp of her stalwart brethren. Ichabod said but little to Ralph Swinton.

"I orter roast ye an' eat yer flesh," he said. "I'm hungry—I'm hungry ez a dorg; but ye belong to Hans, an' what he says, we'll do."

"I gifs him to Pessie," replied Hans. "He vas no use to me."

"We'll settle with him by-'n'-by," said Ichabod. "Make a cheer fur Bessie, boys."

Two strong men made a "chair" of their clasped hands and carried Bessie across the stream, where Silver Voice received her as one risen from the dead, and Ralph looked with a malevolent eye upon their happiness. He was bound hand and foot and put into the same cavity in which he had imprisoned Bessie and Silver Voice, under a strong guard.

"Look yer, Hans," said Ichabod, as they sat about the camp-fire that night, "I wish you'd tell us how you got away from that fire. I thought you was cooked, sure."

"Vy, dot vas easy enough," said Hans. "I can get ous of any knot you can die, yoost so easy as nefer vas. Look; you die my hants unt see."

Ichabod bound the hands of the young scout tightly at the wrists, while he kept his fists tightly clenched. When the knot was tied he allowed the muscles to relax, and slipped his hands out of the knot with the greatest ease.

"Dere!" said Hans, laughing. "I vaited until der shmokt vas t'ick enough, den I gone oud off der fire so quick ash von veasel. I vas hiding ven der fight pegun, unt ash der rest off der poys vas busy, I vent after dot Shwinton mineself. He put Pessie in a hollow dree unt vent away to scout, unt vile he vas gone I dook her oud unt got in dere mineself. Ven he cooms pack, I nabbed him yoost so easy ash a vink."

"Don't call him Swinton any longer," said Seaman. "It is that rank Tory, Walter Butler. We will give him into the

hands of the Tryon County committee, and if they do not hang him I shall be much mistaken. And in this hour of triumph there is no one whom we can thank so much as Hans Phiffer, who has shown himself a noble man."

"Hans is good!" said Mossfoot. "The Oneidas love him, and he is always welcome to their lodges."

Walter Butler was given up to the Tryon County committee, and was tried as a spy, but the treachery of one of his jailers enabled him to escape. He had more villainy to accomplish before he met his fate not far from the spot where his friend Scar Face died, but none of the actors in this story, except Mossfoot, ever saw his face again, for he fell by the bullet of the brave young chief, on the east fork of Canada Creek, in a battle with the Tryon County Militia, under Willett. He died crying for mercy, at the hands of the Oneida, but in vain. He deserved his fate.

The house of Ichabod Salmon was rebuilt and he never suffered from Indian attacks again during the war. Two years after, there was a great wedding at the new house, and Joseph Seaman and Bessie were made man and wife.

Hans Phiffer, Mossfoot and Silver Voice were there, and when the ceremony was concluded, the sturdy Dutchman, after a whispered consultation with the clergyman, led out Gretchen Vanner, a pretty girl who lived not far away, and before five minutes had passed, he too had a wife.

For a few months he remained upon the Oneida, and then the spirit of battle taking possession of him he shouldered his rifle, and, accompanied by his old master, marched away to join the army of Washington, and the two did noble service as scouts all through the war, coming back at intervals to the Oneida valley.

When the war was over, Hans took up a section of land near Oneida lake and built a cabin. Assisted by the Salmon family and Joseph Seaman, he became in time one of the most thriving farmers of the valley. Most welcome to his house, and to those of the other actors in this story, were Mossfoot, the true-hearted chief, and his wife Silver Voice, until all went down to their graves after peaceful lives.

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The vacation escapade. Four boys and teachers.
That naughty boy. Three females and a male.
Mad-cap. An acting charade.
All is not gold that glitters. Acting proverb.
Sic transit gloria mundi. Acting charade.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 13.

Two o'clock in the morning. For three males.
An indignation meeting. For several females.
Before and behind the scenes. Several characters.
The noblest boy. A number of boys and teacher.
Blue Beard. A dress play. For girls and boys.
Not so bad as it seems. For several characters.
A curious moral. For two males and female.
Sense vs. sentiment. For pastor and exhibition.

Worth, not wealth. For four boys and a teacher.
No such word as fail. For several males.
The sleeping beauty. For a school.
An innocent intrigue. Two males and a female.
Old Nabby, the fortune-teller. For three girls.
Boy-talk. For several little boys.
Mother is dead. For several little girls.
A practical illustration. For two boys and girl.

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Mrs. Jonas Jones. Three gents and two ladies.
The born genius. For four gents.
More than one listener. For four gents and lady.
Who can earth is he? For three girls.
The right not to be a pauper. For two boys.
Woman nature will out. For a girls' school.
Benedict and bachelor. For two boys.
The cost of a dress. For five persons.
The surprise party. For six little girls.
A practical demonstration. For three boys.

Refinement. Acting charade. Several characters.
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A conclusive argument. For two girls.
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The fatal mistake. For two young ladies.
Eyes and nose. For one gent and one lady.
Retribution. For a number of boys.

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The fairies' escapade. Numerous characters.
Met's perplexities. For six gentlemen.
Some cure. For two ladies and one gent.
The good there is in each. A number of boys.
Gentlemen or monkey. For two boys.
The little philosopher. For two little girls.
Aunt Polly's lesson. For four ladies.
A wind-fall. Acting charade. For a number.
Will it pay? For two boys.

The heir-at-law. For numerous males.
Don't believe what you hear. For three ladies.
A safe rule. For three ladies.
The chief's resolve. Extract. For two males.
Testing her friends. For several characters.
The foreigner's troubles. For two ladies.
The cat without an owner. Several characters.
Natural selection. For three gentlemen.

DIME DIALOGUES No. 16.

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The meeting of the winds. For a school.
The good they did. For six ladies.
The boy who wins. For six gentlemen.
Good-by day. A colloquy. For three girls.
The sick well man. For three boys.
The investigating committee. For nine ladies.
A "corner" in rogues. For four boys.

The limps of the trunk room. For five girls.
The bonsters. A Colloquy. For two little girls.
Kitty's funeral. For several little girls.
Stratagem. Charade. For several characters.
Testing her scholars. For numerous scholars.
The world is what we make it. Two girls.
The old and the new. For gentleman and lady.

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Eva's glory. For a bevy of boys.
The little peacemaker. For two little girls.
What parts friends. For two little girls.
Martha Washington tea party. For five little girls in old-time costume.
Be evil there is in it. For two young boys.
Wise and foolish little girl. For two girls.
A child's inquiries. For small child and teacher.
The cooking club. For two girls and others.
How to do it. For two boys.
A hundred years to come. For boy and girl.
Don't trust Lucas. For several small boys.
Above the skies. For two small girls.
The true heroism. For three little boys.
Give us little boys a chance; The story of the plum pudding; I'll be a man; A little girl's rights speech; Johnny's opinion of grandmothers; The boasting hen; He knows der best; A small boy's view of corns; Robby's

sermon; Nobody's child; Nutting at grandpa Gray's; Little boy's view of how Columbus discovered America; A little girl's view; Little boy's speech on time; A little boy's pocket; The midnight murder; Robby Rob's second sermon; How the baby came; A boy's observations; The new slate; A mother's love; The crownin' glory; Baby Lulu; Josh Billings on the bumble-bee, wren, alligator; Died yesterday; The chicken's mistake; The heir apparent; Deliver us from evil; Don't want to be good; Only a drunken fellow; The two little robins; Be slow to condemn; A nonsense tale; Little boy's declamation; A child's desire; Bogus; The goblin cat; Rub-a-dub; Calumny; Little chatterbox; Where are they; A boy's view; The twenty frogs; Going to school; A morning bath; The girl of Dundee; A fancy; In the sunlight; The new laid egg; The little musician; Idle Ben; Pottery-man; Then and now.

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A little Vesuvius. For six little girls.
"Sold." For three boys.

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Evidence enough. For two males.
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Does it pay? For six males.
Company manners and home impoliteness. For two males, two females and two children.
The glad days. For two little boys.
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The real cost. For two girls.

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The busy bees. For four little girls.
Checkmate. For numerous characters.
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Death scene. 2 principal characters and adjuncts.
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The mechanic,	Paradoxical,	Ireland, [quer,	My Deborah Lee,
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The horse,	Home,	A mosaic,	A hundred years to
The snake in the grass,	The Lotus-planter,	The old bachelor,	the madman and his
Tale of the tropics,	Little things,	Prayer to light,	Little sermons, [razor,
Bromley's speech,	A Baly's soliloquy,	Little Jim,	Souffles on electricity,
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The fisher's child,	A plan for eggs,	Johnny Shrimps on boots	The ocean storm,
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A Maiden's psalm of life,	Night after Christmas,	Choice of hours,	Little puns,
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Grandfather's clock, The XIXth century, Harry's von little ram, A familiar lecture on science, Old and new time, Clayfoot's spirit race, The village school, A sermon for the sisters, De filosofy ob fan, Disappointed di coverer, A heathen's score, Der dog and der lobster, The young tramp, Delights of the season,	The delights of Spring, Josh Billings's views, Benstesse, How tew pik out a watermelon, How tew pik out a dog How tew pik out a kat How tew pik out a wife, This-side and that, Nocturnal mewings, The lunatic's reverie, A bathetic ballad, The ear, Backbone,	A weak case, They may be happy yet, Orpheus, A side view, Persous, A "classic," Rigid information, The funny man, Don't give it away, A dark warning, A "colored" dissertation An awful warning, An effective appeal, De parson sowed de seed Pmpey's Thanksgiving turkey, The new essay on man,	A new declaration of independence, The jolly old fellow, A Christmas welcome, My first coat, The fire-brands, A patriotic "splurge," The good old times, in- deed! A congratulatory reminder, Stalling the sacred fire, The story of Prometheus modernized, The owl and the pussy- cat.
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Dat's wat's de matter,	All about a bee,	Latest Chinese outrage,	My neighbor's dogs,
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Ven to tide coons in,	A dark side view,	the Irishman,	Pictus,
Dose lams vot Mary haf	Te pesser vay,	Peggy McCann,	The Nereides,
got,	On learning German,	Sprays from Josh Bil	Legends of Attica,
Pat O'Flaherty on wo-	Mary's shmall vite lamb	lings,	The stove-pipe tragedy
man's rights,	A healthy discourse,	De circumstances ob de	A doketor's drubbles,
The home rulers, how	Tobias so to speak,	situation,	The coming man,
they "spakes,"	Old Mrs. Grimces,	Dar's nuffin new under	The illigant affair at
Hezekiah Dawson on	parody,	de sun,	Muldoon's,
Mothers-in-law,	Mars and cats,	A Negro religious poem,	That little baby round
He didn't sell the farm.	Bill Underwood, pilot,	That violin,	the corner,
The true story of Frank-	Old Granley,	Picnic delights,	A genuwine inference,
lin's kite,	The pill peddler's ora-	Our candidate's views,	An invitation to the
I would I were a boy	tion,	Dundreary's wisdom,	bird of liberty,
again,	Widder Green's last	Pinin language by truth-	The crow,
A pathetic story,	words,	ful Jane,	Out west.

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